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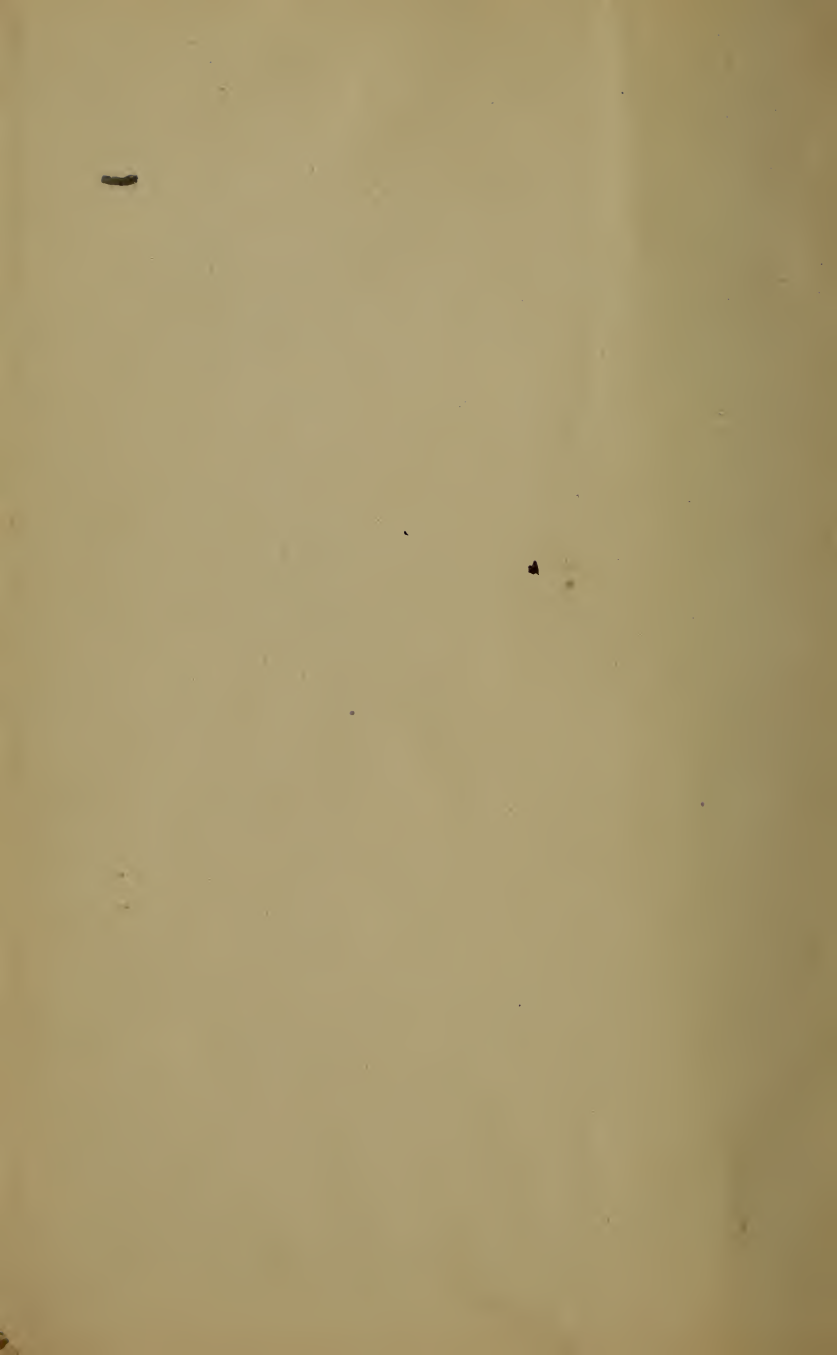
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# STRAY LEAVES OF LITERATURE

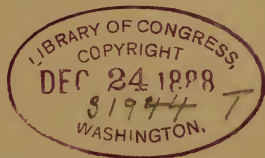
BY ✓

FREDERICK SAUNDERS


AUTHOR OF

“SALAD FOR THE SOLITARY AND THE SOCIAL,” “EVENINGS  
WITH THE SACRED POETS,” “PASTIME PAPERS,”  
“STORY OF SOME FAMOUS BOOKS,” ETC.

41  
“*To write treatises requireth time in the writer and  
leisure in the reader, which is the cause that hath made  
me choose to write certain brief notes, set down rather  
significantly than curiously.*” — LORD BACON.



NEW YORK  
THOMAS WHITTAKER  
2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE  
1888



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“ I loVE my books, they Are coMpanionS dear,  
SteKling In worth, In frieNdsbiP most sinCere ;  
HeRe talk I with thE wise of aGes Gone,  
And with the nobly-Gifted of our own :  
ShOuLd Law, miKth, sCKencE, pOeTry please  
my mKnD,  
These pleasUres eVeR in mY Books I find.”

*(The above book-plate puzzle was found in a translation  
of Guevara's "Epistles," 1577. — BOOKMART.)*



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STRAY LEAVES OF LITERATURE.

vii



## OLD BOOK NOTES.

“The old, so wisdom saith, is better than the new, —  
Friends, like old wine, old books, old days,  
With age do ripen into mellow hue;  
And Time, for what he takes, full oft repays  
True hearts a hundred-fold.”



CONTEMPORARY critic<sup>1</sup> has justly remarked, that, “if there is a fault in our present literary tastes, it is that they are too current. We are addicted to the books of the hour. We keep railway time in our reading; if we shut a little steam off occasionally, and allow ourselves to pause at a great author, we hurry on so much the faster, to make up for lost minutes.” In the present day, the literature of fiction, and that not of the highest order, seems to monopolize three-fourths of the popular reading, and, as a matter of course, at the expense of works of accredited skill in history, biography, ethics, science, and philosophy. The wealth

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<sup>1</sup> W. C. Hazlitt.

of learning bequeathed to us by the great leaders of thought in past ages is thus to a great extent ignored, and no less the delightful treasures of early poesy. What charming glimpses has not the minstrel-monk of old presented to us of English life, — civic and rural, — in his far-off day ! And we share with him in his delight, as we inspect his glowing pictures of the stately dances, of gallant knights and gentle dames, or the gorgeous pageants and banquets of feudal magnificence and splendor.

It is among the quaint and curious tomes of long-forgotten lore, that the poet and the philosopher delight to make excursions in quest of the gems of thought and the pearls of song.

Said Carlyle, “Of all the things which man can do or make here below, by far the most momentous, wonderful, and worthy are the things we call books.” And Gibbon was scarcely less enthusiastic in their praise, when he confessed that his love for them constituted the pleasure and glory of his life. Hood spoke from experience, when he declared that many a trouble had been soothed



through the agency of a book, and many a dragon-like care charmed to sleep by the sweet song of the poet ; “for all which,” he adds, “I incessantly cry, not aloud, but in my heart, ‘ thanks and honor to the glorious masters of the pen.’ ” While they thus hold us spell-bound, as by a magician’s wand, and also charm away our sorrows and all unwelcome thoughts, they oftentimes instill lessons of wit and wisdom, —

“ With many a moral scattered here and there,  
Not very new, nor yet the worse for wear.”

Said Ruskin, “ Bread of flour is good ; but there is bread sweet as honey, if we would eat, in a good book ; nor is it serviceable until it has been read and re-read, and loved and loved again.”

“ Happy, indeed, with the best of happiness, is the man or woman who loves books truly. It is a passion, this love of books, whose calm joys are permitted alike to young and old, wise and simple. It is the only love that knows no decadence, whose arrows have no poisoned barb, whose enjoyments are wholly profitable and without

satiety. Let it not be said that the love, the worship, of books is an unworthy pursuit ; for books are the noblest things in this world of ours.”<sup>1</sup>

Books possess a talismanic power, and never are they affected by climate or circumstances.

“Books bring me friends, where'er on earth I be,—  
Solace of solitude, bonds of society,  
If love, joy, laughter, sorrow, please my mind,  
Love, joy, grief, laughter, in my books I find.”

We shall be more ready to estimate at its true value the rich legacy bequeathed to us in books, when we remember under what privations and difficulties many of the renowned creations of genius have been produced. “Sometimes under restraint and in prison, as when Cervantes illuminated his cell with the exploits of chivalry ; as when Raleigh sends forth his mind through the barred window, to gather materials for his ‘History of the World ;’ or as when Bunyan, whose fancy could not be seized by bailiff, mounts from the spiked floor to the height

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<sup>1</sup> S. Britton.

of Allegory at a bound, and peoples his desolate jail with imaginary forms and scenery, which have become immortal. Sometimes in blindness, as when Homer, with darkened eyes, yet saw the conflicts of the heroes and gods of old; and as when Milton, with scarcely pardonable audacity, walked the garden of paradise, and ventured even into the councils of heaven." <sup>1</sup>

Even to gaze upon a choice collection of genuine books is a privileged pleasure, somewhat akin to the delight we feel in looking over some rich *parterre* of many-hued flowers, and inhaling their fragrant incense. Of course it is a far richer entertainment to partake of "the dainties that are bred in a book:" that is a feast of the gods, their ambrosia and nectar. What wonder that the great men of old should have been such lovers of books; for Plato and Aristotle, Plutarch, Pliny and Horace, Virgil and Marcus Aurelius, were of the order. And what innumerable tributes, in prose and verse, have there not been lovingly inscribed to the honor of books!

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<sup>1</sup> Marsh.

“The lover of reading,” wrote Leigh Hunt, “will derive agreeable terror from ‘Sir Bertram’ and the ‘Haunted Chamber,’ will assent with delighted reason to every sentence in Mrs. Barbauld’s ‘Essay,’ will feel himself wandering into solitudes with Gray, shake honest hands with Sir Roger de Coverley, be ready to embrace Parson Adams, will travel with Marco Polo and Mungo Park, stay at home with Thomson, retire with Cowley, be industrious with Hutton, sympathizing with Gay, melancholy and forlorn and self-restored with the shipwrecked mariner of De Foe ;” such is the mesmeric power of true books.

The love of reading, which Gibbon declared he would not exchange for all the treasures of India, was, in fact, with Macaulay “a main element of happiness in one of the happiest lives that it has ever fallen to the lot of the biographer to record.” There are, however, many books to which may justly be applied, in a sarcastic sense, the ambiguous remark once said to have been made to an unfortunate author, “I will lose no time in reading your book.”



Lovers of richly illuminated parchments, in the olden time, are followed by devotees equally enthusiastic over the modern printed volumes; they are, however, too numerous even to name. Such were Montaigne, Burton, Coleridge, Southey, Hazlitt, and Lamb, who, on one occasion, was seen to kiss a folio of Chapman's "Homer," which he had just brought home; and poor Southey, who, when he had outlived his mental vigor, used to sit in his study and fondly handle his favorite books. But it must be remembered that in literature, as in art, the productions of human genius are not all pure gold: spurious coin will be found occasionally to mingle with that of the genuine mint; and as in the kingdom of nature, so with books, the rule of the survival of the fittest obtains. Indeed, it has passed into a proverb, that—

"There's nothing hath enduring youth,  
Except old friends, old books, and truth"

Book-lovers, it is needless to state, will instinctively preserve, with jealous care, their literary treasures, whether they be clad in gay or homely guise; since it is less for their

exterior appearance than their intellectual worth, that they prize them.

“But whether it be worth or looks,  
We gently love or strongly;  
Such virtue doth reside in books  
We scarce can love them wrongly;  
To sages an eternal school,  
A hobby (harmless) to the fool.”

The true book-lover is seen by the gentle, almost reverential, manner in which he handles his books; it is an instinctive feeling that governs the act. Many — the many, may it not be said — treat a book as a mere commonplace thing, forgetting that it contains the volatile essence of human thought, and is the product of genius. “There are men whose handling of your books makes you tremble. It is told even of the great Professor Wilson, that he would stalk into Blackwood’s shop, and, disdainful of implements, would rip open the leaves of uncut books with his great fingers. Somehow this horrible tale is never quite absent from the mind when ‘Christopher North’ occupies it, and something of the aroma of the inimitable ‘Noctes’ vanishes. Some yahoos turn down

corners 'to keep a place ;' others call themselves human, yet cut books with hair-pins and pen-holders, or only cut within half an inch of the back, and leave the rest to tear."<sup>1</sup>

Alonzo of Aragon said, "Age is a recommendation in four things, — old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to trust, and old books to read." The oldest books of the world are interesting on account of their very age. "And the works which have influenced the opinions, or charmed the leisure hours, of millions of men in distant times, and far away regions, are well worth reading on that very account, even if they seem scarcely to deserve their reputation."

If we accept Dr. Holmes's estimate, the old books, so called, are really the productions of the world's youth, and the new ones the fruit of its age. Samuel Rogers, the poet-banker, once told a friend, that, whenever he received a new production of the press, he instinctively turned to some old book-favorite in preference. In our day, so overwhelming are the issues of the press,

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<sup>1</sup> S. Britton.

that there are but few, comparatively, who have the time to consult the old writers.

“Yet, were new books but small and few,  
We'd have a chance to read the new,  
And not forget the old.”

Readers of new books only—like those who indulge too freely in new bread—may suffer from dyspepsia, mentally and physically. When it is remembered how few of the multitude of books that are perpetually emanating from the press, the world over, live even a decade of years, it is not surprising that students and lovers of learning should prize all the more those works that have attained an enduring reputation. As an illustrative instance, the “Essays” of Lord Bacon might be cited: these admirable papers, although dating back to the year 1597, are still regarded with undiminished favor. Morley, referring to the literature of *aphorism*, affirms that it contains “one English name of magnificent and immortal lustre, — the name of Francis Bacon. His ‘Essays’ are the unique masterpiece in our literature of this oracular wisdom of life, applied to the scat-

tered occasions of our existence. These 'Essays' are known to all the world." They were originally only ten in number; but in a subsequent edition, printed in 1612, others were added, and subsequently the author spent much time in retouching and improving them. Of his *opus magnum*, the "Novum Organum," which first appeared in 1620, we have evidence of the pains he took with that work to render it worthy of his reputation. He copied and corrected the entire manuscript twelve times before he gave the great work to the world. Perchance it will be urged that the old writers were verbose and wearisomely prolix, and that the moderns have the advantage of condensation: this is readily admitted, since brevity in writing is as important as is charity among the virtues.

It has been said, that, with the exception of Johnson's and Coleridge's volumes, we have nothing of equal value with the slim volume of Selden's "Table-Talk." Milton even styled Selden "the chief of the learned men reputed in this land;" and Whitelock states that "his mind was as great as his learning." He was intimate with Ben Jonson, who addressed a

poetic epistle to him, in which he styles him "monarch in letters." His entire writings formed three great folio volumes. Napoleon said things which told in history, like his battles ; and Luther's "Table-Talk " glows with the fire which burnt the Papal Bull ; and yet this now famous book, containing "stray fragments of talk separated from the context of casual and unrestrained conversation, and collected probably without the speaker's knowledge, one, two, three at a time, over a period of twenty years," was not published until thirty-five years after the death of its author.

Sir Thomas More's "Utopia," originally written in Latin, but translated by Burnet, soon became familiar to English readers. It is a philosophical romance of the same class as Lord Bacon's "New Atlantis." Its purpose was to portray an ideal commonwealth, where the usages of life and its laws should be in accord with philosophical perfection. The work is now seldom read. Another work now almost passed into oblivion is Roger Ascham's "Schoolmaster," — a work which, however, is still regarded as valuable, not

only because it was the first important work on education in our literature, but also because of the wise rules and principles it advocates. Ascham wrote this work when he was tutor to Queen Elizabeth, but it was not published until after his death. The book grew out of a conversation at Cecil's dinner-party at Windsor, on the subject of discipline at Eton College. The "Schoolmaster" will long be remembered for the quaint and interesting passage, often since quoted, from its connection with the gifted but hapless Lady Jane Grey.

In the Elizabethan epoch, the literature of England culminated with such an outburst of literary genius as no age or country had ever before witnessed. "The literary fecundity of that period of English history which embraces the latter half of the reign of Elizabeth, and the whole of that of James I., is a perpetual astonishment to us all." Then came the Cromwellian era, with its Puritans and Cavaliers; Milton and his noble colleagues, — those pioneers who fought like heroes for liberty, religious and political.

There is a singular story related of a work



of a different order from the fore-mentioned, — Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." The book is not generally consulted or thought of in these days; but when it made its advent, in 1621, it had a remarkable popularity. The publisher, it is stated, by his share of its results, bought an estate. Among its admirers were Milton, Sterne, Swift, Johnson, and Byron, who called it "the most exciting and instructive medley of quotations and classical anecdotes he ever perused." Dr. Johnson is popularly reported to have said that Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy" was the only book that ever got him out of bed before the proper time. "The Athenæum" said, "It has an absolutely unique charm; there is no other book with which it can be compared. One may linger over its pages for many days and nights together, and then, with re-doubled ardor, read it through again." It has proved the prolific resort of plagiarists and of any amount of literary larceny. Beckford, the author of "Vathek," said that half of the modern books of his day had been decanted from it. Burton in his work is said to refer to nearly two hundred authors whom nobody nowa-



days ever heard of. He wrote this strange admixture of wit, fancy, and good sense, during his twenty years of literary leisure at the University of Oxford, with the intent, as he states, of curing his hypochondria, although he did not accomplish his purpose. "Sterne has interwoven many parts of it into his own popular performance ; Milton did not disdain to build two of his finest poems on it ; and a host of inferior writers have embellished their works with beauties not their own, culled from a performance which they had not the justice even to mention."

"Burton's book, by the way, had its prototype in that scarce work, Timothy Bright's 'A Treatise of Melancholie. Containing the causes thereof and reasons of the strange effects it worketh in our minds and bodies ; with the phisicke cure, and spirituall consolation for such as have thereto abjoynd an afflicted conscience. The difference betwixt it and melancholie, with diverse physopkicall discourses touching actions and affections of soule, spirit, and body ; the particulars whereof are to be scene before the book.' This was a small 8vo printed by Thomas Vantrollier in

1586. Dr. Bright was also the author of 'Charactery; an Arte of Shorte, Swift, and Secrete Writing by Character,' a little 24mo printed at London in 1588. In this book the doctor claims to be the inventor of short-hand."

As Lord Bacon may be said to have been the great preceptor of inductive philosophy, so Sir Isaac Newton may be styled the expounder of the laws of the universe. In the year 1662 was organized the Royal Society of Great Britain; and in 1671 Newton laid before that society his "Theory of Light," followed, in 1687, by his renowned work "Principia." No single work has, perhaps, ever been published which has exerted a more signal influence upon science and the progress of civilization; and yet for this marvellous production, it is said, its author never received any thing but his rich revenue of fame.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "The manuscript of the Principia, without the preface or diagrams, bound in one volume, is the most precious treasure in the possession of the Royal Society; and it is exhibited in a glass case, rarely opened, in the society's library. It has been sometimes stated to be entirely in Newton's handwriting; but Edleston, in his Correspondence of Sir Isaac Newton and Professor

Take another instance : Thomas Fuller, — the contemporary of Milton, — who for his transcendent merits, both in head and heart, has awakened the admiration of men “ whose names will not perish before his own.” Coleridge has said, “ Next to Shakspeare, I am not certain whether Thomas Fuller, beyond all other writers, does not excite in me the sense and emotion of the marvellous. He was incomparably the most sensible, the least prejudiced great man of an age that boasted a galaxy of great men.” Voluminous as are his writings, it is rarely that a page meets the eye in which some epigrammatic sentence does not supply a motto or a maxim. His wonderful memory seems almost to challenge belief, were not the proofs of its power so well authenticated. A writer in “ The Retrospective Review ” has almost equalled Coleridge in his enthusiastic estimate of our author. He says, “ If there ever was an amusing writer

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Cotes, shows that it is not Newton's autograph, the author's own hand being easily recognized in minor additions and alterations. And the same is the case with the manuscript *De Motu Corporum*, constituting, to a certain extent, the first draught of the *Principia*, now in the Cambridge University library. Probably both are in the handwriting of Humphrey Newton, who was Sir

in this world, the facetious Thomas Fuller was that one." He was not only remarkable for his mental endowments, but also for his diligent exercise of them. He was a great collector of traditional stories related of eminent characters, which he has transmitted to us. We get a glimpse of his curious method of composition, eccentric like himself, from his biography.

Fuller's writings were, also, great favorites with Charles Lamb, Robert Southey, and a host of other literary men, for the practical wisdom of his thoughts, and the beauty and variety of the truths which he presents. Though he was by no means a recluse student, and though he lived in one of the most

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Isaac's amanuensis from 1683 to 1689, and who certainly copied the work before it went to press.

"At last, in 1709, on the urgent solicitation of Bentley, master of Trinity College, Newton intrusted to Roger Cotes, the first Plumian Professor at Cambridge, the superintendence of a second edition of the *Principia*; and Newton supplied enlargements and corrections sufficient to make the edition of high original value. It was completed on June 25, 1713; and on the 27th of July, Newton waited on Queen Anne to present a copy to her. The cost of the printing was borne by Bentley, who also received the profits. Conduitt asked Newton how he came to let Bentley print his *Principia*, which he did not understand. 'Why,' said Newton, 'he was covetous, and I let him do it to get money.'

eventful periods of English history, yet the recorded facts of his own career are neither numerous nor important; and these are, for the most part, to be gathered from his own works.

Another notable name as connected with those turbulent times might here be mentioned, that of Sir Thomas Browne, the author of "Religio Medici," which Lord Lytton has said "is one of the most beautiful prose-poems in the language." This work, as its title imports, concerns the religious opinions of a physician; was, it is supposed, suggested by "the sundry contemplations" of his travels on the Continent, through France, Italy, and other States. Sir Thomas is a very interest-

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A third edition of the Principia was brought out in 1726 by Dr. Henry Pemberton, from materials furnished by Newton. Conduitt states that Sir Isaac gave Pemberton two hundred guineas to defray expenses; and it appears that Pemberton received the profits, and besides had three thousand guinea subscriptions for his View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy, published in 1728. Thus we see that for this marvellous work the author never received one penny, but gave his time and thought freely to the world. Well may posterity lavish on Newton's memory all possible honor; for his contemporaries could give him nothing but a business post at the mint, which took much of his time away from his researches, together with the presidency of the Royal Society from 1703 to 1727."—*London Times*.

ing companion for a thoughtful reader ; his candor and independence of thought render his writings very attractive. Notwithstanding his antique and quaint style, this work has maintained its hold upon the attention of scholars, while much of the literature of his day has wholly passed into oblivion. The "Religio Medici" is destined to continue a favorite with scholars, as well for its quaintness and wisdom, as for its being a reflex of the idiosyncrasies of its author.

As to the true authorship of "Gil Blas," much learned discussion has been maintained, on the one side, by Llorente, who insists that this work was the production of the Spanish historian Don Antonio de Solis, — chiefly because no one but this gentleman, it is assumed, could have planned a similar fiction at the time "Gil Blas" is supposed to have been written, which he places in 1588. On the other side of the controversy, Villemain refutes the accusation that Le Sage was indebted for "Gil Blas" to a Spanish original. He says, "Our 'Gil Blas' is not stolen, whatever may have been said to the contrary by Llorente. But doubtless he cleverly cullied

that rational pleasantry, that philosophy, grave yet sweet, sarcastic yet agreeable, which sparkles in Cervantes and in Quevedo ; and to this free and general imitation Le Sage adds the savor of the best of antiquity." Ticknor's remarks are the following: "Le Sage began by translating the 'Don Quixote' of Avellaneda ; but the 'Gil Blas'—the greatest of all his works in prose fiction—is the result of his confirmed strength." Although the graphic power of this writer is admitted to be great, many of the portraitures he presents are revolting to correct taste and morals. Le Sage himself has left us a sad picture of his own career ; his life having been one of obscurity and poverty, and early falling into second childhood, and then dying an object of pity.

Cervantes tells us that he wrote "Don Quixote" to expose false and absurd stories contained in the books of chivalry. The fanaticism caused by those romances was so great in Spain, during the sixteenth century, that the burning of all exciting copies was desired by the Cortes. No books of chivalry were written after the appearance of "Don



Quixote,—a remarkable illustration of the influence of genius in a single book to correct an evil. The idea of the work, as we learn from the preface to the “first part,” was suggested to the author while he was a prisoner at Seville, in 1604. After an interval of eight years, he announced the “second part;” for he at first thought so little of the performance himself, that he laid it aside, and devoted his pen to minor tales and dramas, rather than to its completion. Yet afterward he became proud of the popularity of his production. He had got as far as chapter fifty-nine, when there was put into his hand a small volume entitled “Second Volume of the Ingenious Gentleman, Don Quixote of La Mancha, by Alonso F. de Avellaneda.” In the preface to this spurious continuation, the writer taunts Cervantes with being old, a prisoner, poor, and friendless; but for this interference, it is doubtful whether we should have ever had the genuine work completed by the author.

The original source of the “Arabian Nights’ Entertainments” is disputed. That some of the most fanciful and enchanting tales in the



collection are derived from an Indian source, appears undeniable; although notions and images suited to the sphere of the ideas of a Mohammedan and an inhabitant of western Asia have been substituted for every allusion to polytheism and Hindoo institutions. In England the "Arabian Nights" made their way at once, because, in addition to stories of enchantment which interest the young, they exhibit a true picture of Oriental life and manners. Galland, a French Orientalist, made translations in 1704. Oriental scholars did not hesitate at first to declare against their authenticity; but a more thorough knowledge of Arabic history and custom has proved their genuineness as pictures of Moslem life. The origin of the work—where and by whom written—is involved in mystery. Of the stories translated by Galland, Dr. Russell procured copies of a considerable portion of the originals, during his residence at Aleppo; and most of the tales are known to exist among the Arabic manuscripts in the Vatican, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the British Museum, as well as the Bodleian Library. Dr. Russell says,

“The recitation of Eastern fables and tales partakes somewhat of a dramatic performance. The speaker throws action into his recitals, and he is a welcome visitor at the divans and caravans of the Orient.” The characters portrayed, and the customs and habits described, of course, are pictured with the glowing colors of the East. Youth and age have been said to join hands over these Oriental tales; “David Copperfield” in his nursery, and Macaulay in his study, alike acknowledge the enchantment of the “Arabian Nights.”

Butler’s “Hudibras,” now almost a forgotten book, was, in the days of the “Merrie Monarch,” not only the pet poem of the people, but the special favorite of Charles II. In spite of its inelegancies of style and doggerel diction, it was once considered to contain more true wit than could be found in all the contemporary poets of that day. But while this rude satire was greeted with the laughter and applause of the multitude, and the monarch himself, there was the poor, blind “poet of Paradise,” living in obscurity and neglect, inditing the stately measures of his matchless epic!

The original idea of "Hudibras" was derived from "Don Quixote." Although Butler received unbounded praise for his performance, alike from the king and the people, yet that was about all; for Charles did nothing for him, and he ended his days in extreme poverty, although the satire was written in the interest of the royalist party.

The world-renowned "Curiosities of Literature," of D'Israeli, owes its existence to the following interesting incident. When in his twenty-fifth year, the author became impressed with the idea that an interesting collection might be formed, not only consisting of recollections of contemporary persons of distinction in the realm of science and literature, but also from the resources of his own and other libraries. The taste for literary history was then of recent date in England; Dr. Johnson and his contemporaries having been, to a great extent, instrumental in introducing that branch of literature from the French.

The book was originally published anonymously, and at the expense of the author, who it is said thoughtlessly gave his copyright to his publisher. This he practically

reclaimed, however, in the enlarged edition, and lived not only to prove its remarkable success, but to supplement it by several other works of a cognate character.

Much has recently been suggested as to the choice of books, — books that are considered by critics as most helpful to the reader ; and the need of such hints is at once apparent, when the productions of the press are so prolific and miscellaneous in character. It has been affirmed that more good books are now read than ever before ; yet may it not, with equal truth, be said of books of an opposite character ? If the former class are productive of intellectual and moral benefit, who may compute the destructive influence of vicious books ?

Readers of Fiction — much of which is unwholesome if not pernicious to morals, and obnoxious to cultivated and correct taste — have especial need to discriminate between the true and the false in this branch of literature.

Admitting the unprecedented achievements that render the present age so illustrious, in its wonderful discoveries in science and art, as well as their application to the purposes

of practical life, we must not fail to remember our signal obligations to those intellectual triumphs which rendered so resplendent the great literary epochs that have preceded us.

Doubtless the learning in our day is far more general and diffused, — a most essential factor in national progress, — but may it not be questioned whether our educational system has not suffered somewhat thereby, in its being less exact and thorough? No nation, however, may boast more wide-spread and liberal endowments than are now to be found in the United States; and no people are so generously provided with the facilities of intellectual, ethical, and religious culture.

The civilized world may be generally classified in three varieties: those who know how to value true books, “books that are books;” those who only care for the most trivial and ephemeral books; and that class who are content to disregard books altogether. Some, indeed, buy books as furniture: —

“Nor altogether fool is he, who orders, free from  
doubt,  
Those books which no good library should ever  
be without;  
And blandly locks the well-glazed door  
On tomes that issue never more.”

St. Paul — although doubtless referring to works theological — says, “Give attendance to reading;” and, in another place, enjoins the bringing of “the books, especially the parchments.” Ruskin has the following pertinent remarks : —

“How much do you think we spend altogether on our libraries, public or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses? If a man spends lavishly on his library, you call him mad — a bibliomaniac. But you never call one a horse-maniac, though men ruin themselves every day by their horses; and you do not hear of people ruining themselves by their books. Or, to go lower still, how much do you think the contents of the book-shelves of the United Kingdom, public and private, would fetch, as compared with the contents of its wine-cellars? What position would its expenditure on literature take as compared with its expenditure on luxurious eating? We talk of food for the mind, as of food for the body. Now, a good book contains such food inexhaustible: it is provision for life, and for the best part of us; yet how long most people would

look at the best book before they would give the price of a large turbot for it! Though there have been men who have pinched their stomachs, and bared their backs, to buy a book, whose libraries were cheaper to them, I think, in the end, than most men's dinners are."

Looking at books, as though their authors were in present companionship, Sterne thus pleasantly writes in one of his letters:—

"I often derive a peculiar satisfaction in conversing with the ancient and modern dead, who yet live and speak excellently in their works. My neighbors think me often alone; and yet at such times I am in company with more than five hundred mutes,—each of whom, at my pleasure, communicates his ideas to me by dumb signs, quite as intelligibly as any person living can do by uttering of words."

What can be better said, in this connection, than to give the wise words of Jeremy Collier?

"A man may as well expect to grow stronger by always eating, as wiser by always reading. Too much overcharges nature, and



turns more into disease than nourishment. It is thought and digestion which make books serviceable, and give health and vigor to the mind. Books well chosen neither dull the appetite nor strain the memory, but refresh the inclinations, strengthen the powers, and improve under experiments. By reading, a man does as it were antedate his life, and makes himself contemporary with past ages."

Many, if not most, of the classic writers and old chroniclers have recorded their high estimates of books: we cite only that of the worthy monk, Richard de Bury, who flourished in the thirteenth century. His quaint words, translated from the Latin, are the following: "These are the masters who instruct us without rods and ferules, without hard words and anger. If you approach them, they are not asleep; if you interrogate them, they conceal nothing; if you are ignorant, they cannot laugh at you." Emerson gives us these three rules in regard to the use of books: "Never to read any book that is not a year old, never to read any but famed books, and never to read any



but what you like ;” or, in Shakspeare’s phrase, —

“No profit grows where is no pleasure ta’en ;  
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.”

Montaigne says, “Books are a languid pleasure ; but some are vital and spermatic, not leaving the reader what he was : he shuts the book a richer man.” Cicero calls “a library the soul of a house.” “Beside a library,” says a later authority,<sup>1</sup> “how poor are all the other great deeds of men ! . . . There the thoughts and deeds of the most efficient men, during three thousand years, are accumulated ; and every one who will learn a few conventional signs — twenty-four (magic) letters — can pass at pleasure from Plato to Napoleon ; from the Argonauts to the Afghans ; from the woven mathematics of La Place, to the mythology of Egypt and the lyrics of Burns.”

Seneca styles books “his friends,” and hints that we should be careful in their selection. Few now fail to make their acquaintance, but comparatively few books are

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Davis.

held in memory as friends. Book-love "is said to be the good angel that keeps watch and ward by the poor man's hearth and hallows it; saving him from the temptations that lurk beyond its charmed circle. Book-love is a magician, and carries us with one touch of its fairy wand whithersoever it will." It is also an artist; not only a portrait and landscape painter in letters, but it is no less a physician to heal maladies, or lay asleep a grief or pain. There is also a potency in some books that recall calm and tranquil scenes of by-gone happiness. Southey's love for books outlived even his ability to enjoy their perusal, and Petrarch died with his head resting on a book. Book-love, like all other loves, is capable of exercising a deep and lasting influence over the minds of its votaries, either for good or evil: it may control our future thoughts and lives.

## BALLAD AND SONG LITERATURE.

“Syllables govern the world.”—SELDEN.

**P**OETRY is older than prose. Of this we have what may be called palæontological proof in the structure of all languages. Our every-day speech is fossil poetry; words which are now dead were once alive. The farther we recede, and the lower we descend, the more these wonderful petrifications of old forms of poetic thought and feeling abound.”<sup>1</sup>

During many ages and through many revolutions, minstrelsy retained its influence over both the Teutonic and the Celtic races. The exploits of Athelstane were commemorated by the Anglo-Saxons, and those of Canute by the Danes, in rude poems, of which a few fragments have come down to us. The chants of the Welsh harpers preserved through ages

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<sup>1</sup> Abraham Coles.

of darkness a faint and doubtful memory of Arthur. In the highlands of Scotland may still be gleaned some relics of the old songs about Cuchullin and Fingal. The ballad was, indeed, the means of conveying information in the olden time. Even at an epoch so obscure as that of Charlemagne they were not without their "ancient songs," in which the acts and exploits of heroes and kings were rehearsed. It was from the old historic ballads that the old chroniclers derived their material.

Ballads may be traced in British history to Anglo-Saxon times. Adhelme (who died in A.D. 709) is mentioned as the first who introduced them; and it will be remembered that King Alfred himself sung ballads, while Canute is credited with having composed at least one. If we seek their origin, however, it may be traceable in the wild lays of the Runic Scalds, in the *Nibelungenlied* of the Germans, in the Eddas and Sagas, and in the songs of the Druids. These mythological, ethical, and legendary songs at length led to the ballads of the Celts and Teutons, and ultimately they were developed into the many-hued balladry that we now possess.

With the British ballad may be named the Oriental, and the chivalric minstrelsy of Spain, France, and Italy.

Literature owes much to the early song-writers, ballad-mongers, and satirists; for they have, it may be unwittingly, given us glimpses of life and manners of past times, which otherwise we might not have known. Their uses to history are no less manifest and important; since to the ballad, rather than the chronicle, we look for the every-day life and customs of any people. And it is not to be forgotten that it was the earliest form of traditionary lore, commencing with the pre-historic ages.

“If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation,” was the shrewd remark which is to be attributed to the renowned Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun. The full significance of the remark will be apparent when it is remembered that the author was one of those who admitted the necessity of a union with Scotland, though alive to the national regrets it entailed.

They who deem the above now proverbial

statement extravagant, will not continue to think so, if they only recall the results of that silly ballad of "Lillibullero,"<sup>1</sup> the author of which publicly boasted that he "had rhymed King James out of his three dominions." The fierce hostility that raged during the revolution of 1688 was very productive of such pasquinades, which caused the existing Government much annoyance; nor could they be wholly suppressed by either the pillory or jail. These political squibs, however, were temporary, and distinct from the famous legendary ballad; and, again, the ballad proper is to be distinguished from another order,—the polished verses of the courtly poets. It is to the old legendary songs that Longfellow refers, where he says, "I have a passion for ballads: they are the gypsy children of song, born under the green hedge-

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<sup>1</sup> Lillibullero and Bullen-a-lah are the refrain to a song, said to have been written by Lord Wharton, which had a more powerful effect than the philippics of either Demosthenes or Cicero, and contributed not a little to the great revolution of 1688. Burnet says, "It made an impression on the [king's] army that cannot be imagined. . . . The whole army, and at last the people, both in city and country, were singing it perpetually; . . . never had so slight a thing so great an effect." The song is in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

rows, in the leafy lanes and by-paths of literature, in the genial summertime."

The homely and unpolished rhymes of the mediæval minstrels may be said to possess a subtle fascination in their very quaintness and simplicity, and they also let us into secrets and side views of their every-day life.

Drayton wrote the stirring ballad of "Agincourt" in the sixteenth century, and the "Nut-brown Maid" was written about the same time. The "Robin Hood" legend dates about the close of the twelfth century. The traditions concerning this English outlaw are chiefly derived from Stow's "Chronicle," but this source is now considered apocryphal. These "Robin Hood" ballads were doubtless the popular protests against the oppression of the privileged classes, uttered in song. As to that pet legend of the poets, "Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table," it is now supposed that it refers to a real character. The Welsh bards refer to a Prince Arthur who fought against the Saxons, and held his court at Winchester. A full account of his heroic exploits and wonderful adventures is recorded in the veritable

“chronicle” of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Even in his day, — that is, the twelfth century, — this romantic legend had become incorporated with much of our poetical literature. Macaulay, who has written so appreciatingly of this kind of literature in his preface to his “Lays of Ancient Rome,” states that eighty years ago England possessed only one tattered copy of “Childe Waters” and “Sir Cauline,” and Spain only one copy of the noble poem of the “Cid.” These, with numerous others, have been rescued, and preserved in the Percy collection.

The old Spanish ballad was very prolific ; when first collected, in the sixteenth century, they are said to have numbered about one thousand, most of the writers of which were unknown. From the earliest period the “Cid” has been the occasion of more Spanish ballads, than any other of their heroes. The Moorish ballads, forming a distinct class, were for the most part martial and warlike in character ; others being tales of love and chivalry.

In the early ballad, its interest did not consist either in its rhyme or the music : the one



was often an approach to the doggerel of the improvisator, and the other far more a wild declamatory intoning than singing. The interest lay in the story. But the bard is no longer heard amongst us ; nor is it customary now for any maid to seize her harp, like Flora MacDonald, "and fling a ballad to the moon." Instead, we have Coleridge's "Genevieve" and "The Ancient Mariner," as well as other modern gems from Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, Tennyson, Longfellow, and others ; not forgetting the humorous production of Dr. O. W. Holmes, entitled "The Boston Tea-Party."

According to Hallam, the far-famed "Chevy Chase," which so moved Sir Philip Sidney, had no historic foundation, but was purely legendary. Sidney's words were, "I never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas ["Chevy Chase"], that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet." Ben Jonson was another warm admirer of it.

It has been truly said, that instead of ballad writing, as some have supposed, being the easiest, it is the most difficult kind of poetic composition ; and consequently a true ballad

may be the simplest, and at the same time sublimest, form of poetry. And yet there is a class of *homely* ditties, or nursery rhymes, such as "Jack the Giant-Killer," "Cinderella," "Blue Beard" and others, which are said to have had their origin with the ancient Scandinavians, which linger to our time.

Among the innumerable ballads and songs now conserved, few touch the common heart more readily than "Auld Robin Gray" (written by Lady Ann Lindesay), although it passed for a long time as a genuine ancient ballad. These minstrels and their calling, during the Elizabethan reign and subsequently, fell, however, into disrepute; yet they are entitled to respect for what they accomplished, for they were, in fact, long the only custodians of our popular literature. But the age of traditionary ballads has passed away, and a new order of legendary literature has taken its place; the former bears the impress of its age, and the latter of the individual poet. It has been said the one differs from the other as much as "the wild and dew-fed violet of the meadows differs from the cultivated pansy of our gardens." Some of our

modern ballads, indeed, are simply old friends with new faces: Scott's "Young Lochinvar" tells the same story as the old ballad of "Katharine of Ianfarie," and "The Lass of Lochryan" suggested Burns's song of "Lord Gregory;" while Tennyson's "Lord of Burleigh" is simply a modern version of the fine old ballad of "Donald of the Isles," or "Lizzie Lindsay." Many similar instances might be cited. Without the Percy manuscript, no proper collection of the national ballads of England, it has been said, was possible, since only spurious copies of many of the finest ballads in the language were otherwise to be had. Mr. Furnivall in England, and in America Professor Child of Harvard University, have long been industriously engaged in researches, having in view a complete collection of British ballads. To these gentlemen the world is indebted for the publication of the valuable collection of Bishop Percy. "The manuscript was found lying dirty on the floor, under a bureau, in the parlor of his friend Humphrey Pitt of Shiffnal in Shropshire, being used by the servants to light the fire." The handwriting is

assigned to about the year 1650. The story of the discovery, which is given in detail in Dr. Wheatley's fine edition of the Percy "Reliques," is extremely interesting; and it is gratifying to note that it is to Professor Child's persistent efforts urging antiquarians in England to seek for these antique literary treasures, that we owe their discovery. Above a hundred years had elapsed since the first appearance of the "Reliques;" but the manuscripts lay hid in Ecton Hall, and no one had been allowed to see them until now.

In addition to the "Percy" collection, it should be mentioned, we have the choice "The Roxburghe Ballads," the manuscripts of which are in the British Museum. These are not only the very songs that amused the people of England three centuries ago, but they afford us glimpses of their habits of every-day life in the times of the "great Elizabeth," the stirring events of that romantic and heroic era still enshrined in song.

For all, therefore, who share any interest in these quaint and picturesque relics of the olden times, an abundant and delightful feast

has thus been spread for them by the above-named skilful literary purveyors on both sides of the Atlantic.

Among the multitudinous lyric songs that regale the ear with their rich melody, and stir the heart with their beautiful sentiment, there are few, if any, that surpass for its touching pathos the old familiar refrain of "Home, Sweet Home." It is not only a national song, but it has long since become cosmopolitan.

In the spring of the year 1821, John Howard Payne, while in London, was engaged in writing operas and melodramas under the auspices of John Kemble. In one of these operas, which he called "Clari, the Maid of Milan," he introduced songs and duets, and among them the immortal song of "Home, Sweet Home." It is said that it became very popular at once, over one hundred thousand copies of it having been sold within the year of its appearance. Henry Bishop has the credit of composing or adapting the melody to the words; but Payne relates, that, when he was travelling in Italy, he heard a peasant-girl singing a plain-

tive air which made an instant impression upon him. He dotted down the notes, and he sent them, with the song, to Bishop ; and it may be added, that rarely has there been a union of sound and sense more felicitously formed. This renowned lyric of the *Home* has not only been the universal favorite of the home-circle the world over, but *prima-donnas* have lavished upon it the resources of art, home-wanderers (like its author) have poured out their souls in its plaintive strains, mothers have chanted it over the cradle, until now it has become *the* Home-song of the nations. Years ago when the "Swedish nightingale" (Jenny Lind) visited the United States, and gave concerts at the Castle Garden Hall, on one occasion, being encored, she gave, unexpectedly, "Home, Sweet Home." It was a graceful tribute of honor to its author, whom she noticed as being present.

An illustration of the utter absence of pathos is seen in this rollicking Welsh ballad : —

"The mountain sheep are sweeter, but the valley  
sheep are fatter ;  
So that we deemed it meeter to carry off the latter.

We made an expedition; we met a host and  
quelled it.

We forced a strong position, and killed the men  
who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley, where herds of kine  
were browsing,

We made a mighty sally, to furnish our carousing.

Fierce warriors rushed to meet us: we met them,  
and o'erthrew them.

They struggled hard to beat us; but we conquered  
them, and slew them.

As we marched off at leisure, the king he thought  
to catch us.

His rage surpassed all measure, but his men they  
could not match us.

He fled to his hall-pillars; and, ere our force we  
led off,

Some sacked his house and cellars, whilst others  
cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewildering, spilled blood  
enough to swim in;

We orphaned many children, and we widowed  
many women.

We led away from battle, and much the land  
bemoaned them,

Three thousand head of cattle, and the head of  
him who owned them.



Edynfrid, King of Dyfed, his head was borne  
before us;  
His wine and meat supplied our feast, his over-  
throw our chorus."

It has been well said that national songs—

“Have greater power on earth,  
For each true heart and ear,  
Than all the storied columns  
Conquest's minions rear.”

Music has a rhetoric of its own, often more eloquent than verbal utterance; but allied to impassioned words, its combined power to control, to stir the feelings and emotions, is well nigh irresistible. Its martial strains fire the enthusiasm of the patriot to deeds of heroism in the cause of liberty; its plaintive and tender cadences vibrate with the thrill of affection, and the sympathetic bonds of domestic life; while its solemn peals awaken the heart to ecstasy and devotional rapture.

The characteristics of a people may, indeed, to a certain extent, be enshrined in their national and patriotic songs and ballads. Much of the legendary lore and minstrelsy that have descended to us from sire to son, traceable to the ancient Celtic race, has been



scattered over many of the countries of Europe.

The national anthem of Great Britain, "God save the Queen" (or King), which is played and sung in every part of the British Empire, alike on solemn and festive occasions, has been the subject of controversy with respect to its origin. Its words are supposed to have been suggested by the "Domine Salvum" of the Roman-Catholic Church service. In England the authorship has been generally attributed to Dr. John Bull, who was organist in Queen Elizabeth's Chapel in 1596, professor of music in Gresham College, and chamber-musician of James I. About the period of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, he is said to have composed and played before the king an ode beginning with these words, "God save great James our King!" Bull died at Lubeck, 1622. In Antwerp Cathedral, it has been stated, there is a manuscript copy of it, attached to which is the statement that Dr. John Bull was the author of both the text and the melody; adding that it was composed on the occasion of the discovery of

the Gunpowder Plot, to which the words, "Frustrate their knavish tricks," especially allude. The anthem was first published in a musical periodical called "Harmonia Anglica," in 1742. The air has preserved its original form, but its harmonies are said to have been modified again and again ; indeed, its history is quite an evolution of music.

Another national anthem of Great Britain, "Rule Britannia," has been described by Southey as "the political hymn of England so long as she maintains her political power." Its original appearance was in a masque entitled "Alfred ;" the words being by James Thomson (the poet of the "Seasons") and David Mallet, the music by Dr. Arne.

Many of the best of American national airs were inspired by the events to which they refer, and are the heroic utterances of deeds ever memorable in her national history.

National songs and patriotic symbols are next of kin to national emblems and flags.

The origin of "Yankee Doodle" is somewhat obscure. The statement that the air was composed by Dr. Shuckburg, in 1755, when the Colonial troops united with the

British regulars near Albany, for the conquest of Canada, and that it was produced in derision of the old-fashioned manners of the Provincial soldiers, when contrasted with those of the regulars, was published some years ago in a Boston musical magazine.

But nobody seems to be certain as to the birth or parentage of this popular ditty, for its advent has been by some supposed to be traceable to the times of the Roundheads and Cavaliers. By others it has been said that the song came originally from Germany as a martial air, and was brought to America by the British surgeon above named. The tune (without the intended sarcastic words), it has been well said, "still lives to quicken the heart-beats of every loyal son of Columbia."

The national song "Hail, Columbia!" was written by Joseph Hopkinson of Philadelphia. The author informs us that it was composed in the summer of 1798, when a war with France was thought to be inevitable, and party-spirit was high. At this time a theatrical friend called upon him, requesting him to compose a patriotic song adapted to the tune of the "President's March," then the

popular air. The request was urged on the plea that it might help to fill the theatre, on the occasion of his benefit. On the following day the song was presented, and announced to be sung on the next evening. It proved a great success; and it was sung at every subsequent performance, the audience joining in the chorus with great enthusiasm. It was also sung often in the streets, by large assemblies of citizens, and its fame soon spread all over the United States. The object of the author was to awaken an American spirit, independent of the partisanship which then prevailed.

Francis S. Key wrote our national anthem "The Star-Spangled Banner." It has a history; and the scene it describes was not the offspring of a patriotic and glowing imagination, but real. The author tells us that he described what he actually saw and felt while witnessing the conflict, and the victory that followed. In 1814, when the song was written, the author was in Georgetown, a volunteer in the light artillery, then in the service of the Government.

They were in active service from the time

the British fleet entered the Patuxent, preparatory to the movement upon Washington. It was when Key was anxiously watching the attack of the British marines upon Baltimore, and after the bombardment upon Fort McHenry suddenly ceased, and he learned that they had abandoned it, that he wrote upon the back of a letter the outline of his immortal anthem. The following morning he handed a fair copy of it to his friend, who forthwith sent it to the printer, and copies were soon in every one's hands. According to another account, he wrote the ode "while a prisoner on board a British vessel during the bombardment of Fort McHenry."

Drake's fine patriotic ode to "The American Flag," although of course familiar to the reader, should be noticed here : —

"When Freedom from her mountain height  
Unfurled her standard to the air,  
She tore the azure robe of Night,  
And set the stars of glory there!  
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes  
The milky baldrick of the skies,  
And striped its pure, celestial white  
With streakings of the morning light;

And from his mansion in the sun,  
 She called her eagle-bearer down,  
 And gave into his mighty hand  
 The symbol of her chosen land!"

It is worthy of note that Fitz-Greene Halleck added the climax to the ode, in the closing stanza:—

“Forever float that standard sheet!  
 Where breathes the foe but falls before us,  
 With Freedom’s soil beneath our feet,  
 And Freedom’s banner streaming o’er us?”

Well has it been said, that “as long as the Union stands, that poetic tribute of praise to the symbol of our nationality will thrill the hearts of those to whom our undivided land is dear.”

The “Marseillaise,” the name by which the grand song of the French Revolution is known, owes its existence to the following circumstances: In the early part of the year 1792, when a column of volunteers was about to leave Strasburg, the mayor of the city, who gave a banquet on the occasion, asked an officer of the artillery, named Rouget de l’Isle to compose a song in their honor, as

he was known to have indulged in frequent improvisations. His request was complied with ; and the result was the "Marseillaise," both words and music being the product of a single night. De l'Isle entitled the piece "Chant de Guerre de l'Armée du Rhin." Next day it was sung with that rapturous enthusiasm that only Frenchmen can exhibit ; and instead of six hundred volunteers, one thousand marched out of Strasburg. It was first introduced at Paris by Barbaroux, when he summoned the volunteers in July, 1792. It was received with transports by the Parisians, who, ignorant of its real authorship, named it "Hymn des Marseillais," which name it has since retained. There is a picture in the Louvre, however, representing Rouget de l'Isle singing this grand song of the revolution. It is however believed, from the latest researches of musical scholars, both in France and Germany, that the melody was not composed by Rouget de l'Isle, but was copied by him from the Credo of the fourth mass of Holtzmann of Mursberg, who composed it in 1776 ; and it was first heard in Strasburg, in the hotel of Mme. de Montes-



son, in 1782. It has been said that "it embraces the soft cadences full of the peasant's home, and the stormy clangor of silver and steel when an empire is overthrown; it endears the memory of the vinedresser's cottage, and makes the Frenchman in his exile cry, 'La Belle France!' forgetful of the torch, the sword, and the guillotine, which have made his country a spectre of blood in the eyes of the nations." Oh, what a mighty, devastating spirit went forth from these impassioned words!

Leigh Hunt remarks, that, "though not of the very highest class of art, it is yet one of those genuine compositions, warm from the heart of a man of genius, which please alike the scientific and those who know nothing of music but the effect it has upon them. It has a truly grand movement, which even on the piano suggests the fulness of a band."

Germany's patriotic national song, "Die Wacht am Rhein," was written in 1840, by Max Schneckenberger, when war was thought to be impending with France. Both the words and the music of this stirring battle-song are remarkable, and the heroic chant



became the national song during the Franco-German war of 1870-71. The following is a translation of its opening stanza : —

“There bursts a shout like thunder-peat,  
Like billows’ roar, like clang of steel.  
The Rhine! The Rhine of Germany!  
Oh, who will her defenders be?  
Dear fatherland, in peace recline,  
For steadfast stands our watch on Rhine!”

The Swiss national song is “Ranz des Vaches,” so called from the fact that the cattle, when answering the musical call of their keeper, move toward him in a row, preceded by those wearing bells. It is a simple melody of the Swiss mountaineers, commonly played on a long trumpet, or *Alpine horn*. This melody, when heard by Swiss soldiers away from home, is said to create, in a remarkable degree, nostalgia, or homesickness; and hence its performance, by military bands of regiments containing such soldiers, is not allowed.


Austria has her “Gott erhalte Franz der Kaiser;” Prussia, her “Heil dem im Siegeskranz;” and Belgium, her “Braubanconne.”

Not only have there been, of old, national songs, but popular songs and songs of trades. "The story of Amphion building Thebes with his lyre was not a fable," says Dr. Clarke. "At Thebes, in the harmonious adjustment of those masses which remain belonging to the ancient walls, we saw enough to convince us that this story was no fable; for it was a very ancient custom to carry on immense labor by an accompaniment of music and singing. The custom still exists, both in Egypt and Greece." Athenæus has preserved the Greek *names* of different songs as sung by various trades, but unfortunately none of the songs themselves. Dr. Johnson refers to an "oar-song" used by the Hebrideans; and also to the fact, that the strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulations of the "Harvest-song," in which all their voices were united. The gondoliers of Venice while away their long midnight hours on the water with the stanzas of Tasso, and fragments of Homer are sung by the Greek sailors of the Archipelago. Dibdin's nautical lyrics are a charm and a solace to all British tars, in long voyages, battles, and

storms ; and even in mutinies, have been quoted to the restoration of order and discipline.

“ Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound ;  
She feels no biting pang the while she sings,  
Nor, as she turns the giddy wheel around,  
Revolves the sad vicissitudes of things.”

## HUMAN SYMPATHY.

 HERE are few words so full of tenderness and affection as the word "sympathy:" it seems to belong to the cherished names of "mother," "home," and "heaven." It is likely to remain an undecided question, whether it is really possible to do a purely disinterested action; for it is quite evident, that, in proportion as we exercise a generous spirit of self-denial for the good of others, we increase our individual happiness. Charity, we are told, begins at home; but its evident mission is to go abroad on errands of mercy. Even the little, inexpensive courtesy of a smile to cheer the sad, or a cup of water to the thirsty, has its reward. It is well to have "a smile that children love."

Charity, in whatever guise she appears, is the best-natured and the best-complexioned thing in the world. It would be cynical and unjust, indeed, to say or suppose that this

queenly virtue has left our humanity ; for we have noble instances of beneficence amongst us to an extent unsurpassed by any previous age.

“To meet the glad with cheerful smiles, or wipe the  
tearful eyes,  
With a heart at leisure from itself, to soothe and  
sympathize.”

To speak a kind word to the friendless, to feed the hungry, lift the fallen, and reclaim the wanderer to virtue, — not only impress true dignity upon the character, but furnish to the possessor of this heaven-born faculty a revenue of true happiness.

We are accustomed to attribute the feeling of sympathy for the misfortunes of others to pure benevolence or good-nature ; but Burke in his analysis of it says, “The delight we have in such things hinders us from shunning scenes of misery, and the pain we feel prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer ; and all this, antecedent to any reasoning, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes, without our concurrence.” The same authority adds, “Next to love, sympathy is the divinest

passion of the human heart ; and a craving for sympathy — which few are found indifferent to — is said to be the common boundary-line between joy and sorrow." Cowper has condensed the statement thus, —

"'Tis woven in the world's great plan, and fixed by  
 Heaven's decree,  
 That all the true delights of man should spring  
 from sympathy.  
 Thus grief itself has comforts dear the sordid  
 never know ;  
 And ecstasy attends the tear when virtue bids it  
 flow."

To a favored few is given the rare and happy faculty of illustrating this beneficent ministry on a large scale, and thus ennobling our human nature, and making beautiful the common places of life. Such benefactors have —

"A mind that is quick to perceive and know,  
 A heart that can feel for another's woe ;  
 With sympathies large enough to enfold  
 All men as brothers."

The principles of self-interest and self-denial, as the centre and circumference of human culture, rightly adjusted, form a sym-

metrical and well-balanced character ; and, like the opposing forces of the universe, they maintain the moral equilibrium. Self-preservation is said to be the first law of nature ; and, on the other hand, we are taught in Holy Writ, that “no man liveth to himself,” and that we should “love our neighbor as ourself.” The requirement is unimpeachable. Self dominates all through life : it comes in with infancy ; and, gathering strength with maturity, rules without intermission, except when restrained and governed by Christian principle. Selfishness is diametrically opposed to the genius of Christianity : to sacrifice all to self, therefore, is the lowest form of idolatry. Utter self-abnegation or monkish asceticism, however, is not demanded : that is the opposite error.

“Two principles in human nature reign, —  
Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain.”

While Christianity does not enjoin asceticism, it does demand sacrifice ; since love, in its essential character, is sacrificial. The standard is as high as the Decalogue, to which we avow allegiance, — at least, those

“ who profess and call themselves Christians,”  
— and yet, —

“ Even in the best, who war with wild self-will,  
How oft some vanity betrays it still ! ”

It has been well said, that selfishness resembles the Caspian Sea, which has some unseen outlet for its waters, so that whatever rains come down, or rivers flow into it, its great gulf never fills, and never a rill runs out from it again : so there is a greedy, all-devouring selfishness, which, whatever rivers of pleasure flow into it, always contrives to dispose of the whole in the caverns and subterranean passages of its capacious egotism, — the vast *mare internum* of self, without one drop overflowing in kindness to others.

Take the selfishness out of this world, and there would be more happiness, it has been said, “ than we should know what to do with.”

“ There is scarcely a man who is not conscious of the benefits which his own mind has received from the performance of single acts of benevolence. How strange that so few of us try a course of the same medicine ! ”

Our real sympathies, also, are terribly con-



fined to our own class in society. How often may be heard matrons, endowed with a retinue of children, express surprise that their domestic servants should ever desire "followers" !

Goldsmith's good-nature was illustrated in many recorded incidents. On one occasion he visited a poor woman, whose sickness he plainly saw was aggravated by her poverty ; and, on his return home, he sent her a large pill-box containing a few sovereigns, with this inscription on the cover : " To be taken as occasion may require."

Horace Smith has well defined over-weening self-love, as " keeping the private I too much in the public eye." Self-love, the greatest of flatterers, exaggerates both faults and virtues. But there is a great difference between such foolish vanity, and a judicious self-esteem and a proper self-reliance ; for the spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth and development. Self-love, within just limitations, — or what is its equivalent, the desire of happiness, — is inseparable from the nature of man as a rational and sensitive being. Bacon has said, " Self-respect is next to religion, the chiefest bridle of all the

vices ;” and it may be said that respect for the claims of others no less governs our deportment and behavior.

It has often been asked, What is happiness?—that phantom of which we hear so much, and see so little ; whose promises are constantly given and constantly broken, but as constantly believed ; that cheats us with the sound instead of the substance, with the blossom instead of the fruit. Like a will-o'-the-wisp, it is sometimes farthest off when we imagine we can grasp it, and nearest to us when it appears to be at a distance. The most effectual way to secure it to ourselves is to confer it upon others.

Tuckerman, referring to sympathy, remarks, that “it is one of the primal principles of efficient genius ; and that it is this truth of feeling which enabled Shakspeare to depict so strongly the various stages of passion, and the depth, growth, and gradations of sentiment. It sometimes seems as if, along with childhood’s ready sympathy, many of the other characteristics of that epoch were projected into the more mature stages of being. It is by their sympathy, their sincere

and universal interest in humanity, that the sweetest poets and the dramatists are enabled to write in a manner corresponding with the heaven-attuned, unwritten music of the human heart."

The following incident, illustrative of the sensibility as well as the modesty of true genius, may not be inopportune in this connection. When Barry the painter placed on exhibition one of his early pictures, so great was its excellence, that some one present in the gallery, on seeing it, expressed his doubt as to its being by the artist, his name then being unknown to fame. The remark affected him to tears; and Edmund Burke, who was standing by him, noticing that Barry had retired to the ante-room in distress, followed him, and sought to comfort him. Barry, in the course of conversation, quoted some passage from "An Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful," which had recently been published anonymously, and which the artist praised very highly. Burke affected to sneer at it, when Barry showed even more feeling in his enthusiasm for the essay than he had evinced for his own picture. Burke then,

smiling, acknowledged the authorship. "I could not afford to buy the work," said Barry, "but I have transcribed every line of it with my own hands;" at the same time taking from his pocket the manuscript to show him. They clasped hands in enduring friendship.

"Sweet Charity, the child of God!  
 Who would not sound her praise abroad?  
 Who, when she sees the sufferer bleed,  
 Reckless of name or sect or creed,  
 Comes with prompt hand and look benign,  
 To bathe his wounds in oil and wine;  
 Who in her robe the sinner hides,  
 And soothes and pities while she chides;  
 Who lends an ear to every cry,  
 And asks no plea but misery.  
 Her tender mercies freely fall,  
 Like heaven's refreshing dews, on all;  
 Encircling in their wide embrace  
 Her friends, her foes, — the human race."

Shakspeare points, among other reasons, "You are not young, no more am I; go to, then, there's sympathy." As an instance of the absurd in sympathy, the "Tin Trumpet" supplies the following: —

"A city damsel whose ideas had been Arcadianized by the perusal of pastorals,

having once made an excursion to a distance of twenty miles from London, wandered into the fields in the hope of discovering a *bona-fide* live 'shepherd.' To her delight, she at length encountered one, under a hawthorn hedge in full blossom, with his dog by his side, his crook in his hand, and his sheep round about him, just as if he were sitting to be modelled in china for a chimney ornament. But our swain wanted the indispensable accompaniment of a pastoral reed, in order that he might beguile his solitude with the charms of music. Touched with pity at this privation, and lapsing unconsciously into poetical language, the civic damsel exclaimed, 'Ah, gentle shepherd, tell me where's your pipe?' — 'I left it at home, miss,' replied the clown, scratching his head, "'cause I ha'nt got no baccy.'"

There is a local sympathy in which we cannot well be mistaken, and which it is lamentable not to possess; for "that man," to use the words of Dr. Johnson, "is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

Steele gives us this practical summary : —

“There are none who deserve superiority over others, in the esteem of mankind, who do not make it their endeavor to be beneficial to society ; and who, upon all occasions which their circumstances of life can administer, do not take a certain unfeigned pleasure in conferring benefits of one kind or other. It is in every man’s power, who is above mere poverty, not only to do things worthy, but heroic. The great foundation of civil virtue is self-denial ; and there is no one, above the necessities of life, but has opportunities of exercising that noble quality. The most miserable of all beings is the most envious, while the most communicative is among the happiest.”

## THE SEASONS AND THEIR CHANGE.

“To him who in the love of Nature holds  
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks  
A various language.” — BRYANT.



LIKE the glad dawn ushering in the winged hours of day, the jocund Spring heralds the successive changes of the seasons. The very name, Spring, is suggestive of budding blossoms and fragrant flowers; while the radiant sheen of summer skies prepares us for the mellow tints and gorgeous hues of autumn, with her varied fruits and golden grain. At last creeps on, with stealthy steps, grim Winter with his chilling breath, his frozen rivers, leafless forests, and snow-clad landscapes. Well may the poet indite his song of welcome to the new-born Spring: —

“’Tis sweet, in the green spring, to gaze upon the  
wakening fields around:

Birds in the thicket sing, winds whisper, waters  
prattle from the ground;

A thousand odors rise,

Breathed up from blossoms of a thousand dyes.”



The vernal season — which Mrs. Barbauld apostrophizes as “the sweet daughter of a rough and stormy sire, hoar Winter’s blooming child” — comes to us wreathed with smiles, and perfumed with fragrant incense. Therefore, the tuneful bards are vocal with her praise.

“I marked the Spring, as she passed along,  
 With her eye of light and her lip of song;  
 While she stole, in peace, o’er the green earth’s  
     breast,  
 While the streams sprang out from their icy rest;  
 The buds bent low to the breeze’s sigh,  
 And their breath went forth to the scented sky;  
 When the fields looked fresh in their sweet repose,  
 And the young dews slept on the new-born rose.”

There is a feeling of mingled sadness and hope often felt with the incoming spring, which it is not easy to define. The secret, silent forces of Nature in her reviving life, as seen in the more genial atmosphere, the slow lengthening of the day, the bursting of buds and blossoms, and the carolling of the early birds, — all which are full of significance, and suggestive of the mutations which are in a similar manner going on with our-



selves. In the realm of physical nature the old skeleton trees of the forest are being re-clothed with the new foliage, the dead flowers are quickened into life and beauty again, and all animated things rejoice with gladness. We, too, are borderers of both worlds, — the dead past and the living present, — and we instinctively are stirred by these inarticulate teachings of Nature ; for they remind us of that border-land wherein perpetual spring-tide abides, and death is unknown. What more beautiful description of the glories of Spring can be found than this from Solomon's Song ! "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." This beautiful tribute, it should, however, be remembered, was written for the far-distant Orient, and not this Western hemisphere and these our modern days. With us the fairy nymph is usually accompanied with that blustering, rude Boreas, who causes such boisterous excitement and discomfiture to our visual and olfactory nerves, while seeking to awaken Nature from her long sleep of winter.

While we deprecate the infliction of these personal incivilities, these winds yet serve useful purposes in the economy of Nature. Hood has turned his facile and felicitous pen as evidence against the laudations of his brother bards, in the following deprecatory lines : —

“Come, gentle Spring! ethereal mildness, come!’  
 O Thomson! — void of rhyme as well as reason —  
 How couldst thou thus poor human nature *hum*?  
 There’s no such season!  
 Let others eulogize her floral shows,  
 From me they cannot win a single stanza;  
 I know her blooms are in full blow, — and so’s  
 The influenza!  
 Her cowslips, stocks, and lilies of the vale;  
 Her honey-blossoms that you hear the bees at;  
 Her pansies, daffodils, and primrose pale, —  
 Are things I sneeze at!”

Among the earliest and prettiest of Spring’s star-shaped flowers is the primrose. It is refreshing both to the eye and the heart to look upon it; for it has a peculiar charm and delicacy in its golden hue, unlike that of other yellow wayside flowers. Izaak Walton was a great lover of primroses, which were among those he considered “too beautiful to be

looked upon except on holidays." He tells us how he was once sitting under a beech-tree, when "the birds in an adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree near to the brow of that primrose hill."

The fitful month of April, with its alternating smiles and tears, has been thus apostrophized : —

"Sighing, storming, singing, smiling, with her many  
    modes beguiling,  
    April walks the wakening earth ;  
Wheresoe'er she looks and lingers, wheresoe'er she  
    lays her fingers,  
    Some new charm starts into birth ;  
Fitful clouds about her sweeping, coming, going,  
    frowning, weeping, —  
Melt in fertile blessings round."

The "queen-month of the calendar" has been the chosen theme of many bards, from Chaucer to Tennyson. Milton thus hymns her praise : —

"The flowery May, who from her green lap throws  
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.  
Hail, beauteous May! that dost inspire  
Mirth and youth and fond desire :

Woods and groves are of thy dressing,  
 Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing;  
 Thus we salute thee with our grateful song,  
 And welcome thee, and wish thee long."

May is synonymous with sunny weather, and by poetical license has been styled the bridal season of nature and its honeymoon, since the tuneful feathered tribes are vocal, and the other orders of animated creatures seem to keep in harmony with them; while —

"Buds are filling, leaves are swelling, flowers on  
 field, and bloom on tree;  
 And o'er the earth and air and ocean, Nature  
 holds her jubilee."

No longer are seen enacted the old-time festivities of the rural May-queen; but in our more prosaic life, some denizens of New York, at least, are amusing themselves with changing their local habitations.

"Thus Nature, decked in bravest dress,  
 And fed with genial, fertile showers,  
 Laughs out amid her sweet May flowers,  
 That blush for very happiness."

Coleridge's couplet now suggests itself as we leave the delicate-footed May, and hail the floral month of June: —

“Many a hidden brook, in this leafy month of June,  
To the sleeping woods all night singeth a quiet  
tune.”

Towards the close of this month the hay-making and garnering of the grain commence in some parts of the country. What can be more delicious to the sense than the scent of flowers and the new-mown meadows?

Summer's advent awakens in all hearts a welcome and responsive joy, for it is the season of joy and melody and love; when “Nature, crowned and garlanded with flowers, walks forth a rustic queen through field and grove, or decks with regal pomp her fairest bowers.” In midsummer comes the longest day, and Wordsworth's poem on it naturally suggests itself: —

“Evening now unbinds the fetters fashioned by the  
glowing light;  
All that breathe are thankful debtors to the har-  
binger of night.  
Yet, by some grave thoughts attended, eve reviews  
her calm career;  
For the day that now is ended is the longest of the  
year!  
Summer ebbs; each day that follows is a reflex  
from on high,  
Tending to the darksome hollows where the frosts  
of winter lie.”

“So long is the day at this time of the year,” writes a lover of nature,<sup>1</sup> “that, being awakened at half-past two in the morning, I saw unmistakable indications of the dawn, and heard not one, but many, birds already in full song. Those who have not seen it can have little conception of the strange and magical beauty of a summer morning at this hour. The stars were all gone, but the thin moon was rising in the east. The sun would soon follow after, and the saffron color of the day was already passing over the sky and tinging the clouds. I know of no other appearance in nature which gives the same idea of soft, quiet, gradual, and yet altogether certain and irresistible subjugation. It is the kingdom of light driving out the kingdom of darkness. On the same day the birds were still singing at half-past nine in the evening. On other occasions I have heard the thrush as late as ten o’clock.”

In the sultry Summer, when Sol is in the ascendant, he gives to us such an ardent greeting, that we sometimes wish it were a little more moderate. Midsummer is high

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<sup>1</sup> Milner.

noon of the year, a kind of halfway stopping place, reminding us of the meridian of life,— a point in our history when we may take a review of the past, and a glance at the future of our career. We all admit the truth of the lines : —

“The more we live, more brief appears our life’s  
succeeding stages ;  
A day to childhood seems a year, and years like  
passing ages.  
Heaven gives our years of fading strength indem-  
nifying fleetness,  
And those of youth a *seeming* length, proportion-  
ate to their sweetness.”

Summer time in the country is a theme of such deep interest that to attempt even a passing allusion to it, would, it is feared, but tempt us to ramble too widely among its clustered beauties ; and so our glance must be a brief one. Not to speak of the grand ancestral trees of the woods and fields, how much of leafy splendor does Summer deck herself withal, while the delicate beauty of the leaves and their great variety of form no less excite our wonder.

The radiant skies are now blending into



the mellow tints of russet Autumn, who, with her hand grasped in the feeble clasp of Summer, as if the latter were loath to depart, still retains much green hanging about the woods, and much blue and sunshine about the sky and earth. But the leaves are rustling in the forest paths, the harvest-fields are silent, and the heavy fruit that bows down the branches proclaims that the labor of Summer is ended, that her yellow-robed sister has come to gather in and garner the rich treasures she has left behind. "Forest scenery never looks so beautiful as in the autumn-time: it is then that Nature seems to have exhausted all the fantastic colors of her palette, and to have scattered her richest red, brown, yellow, and purple upon the foliage." Like some richly illuminated manuscript of mediæval art, the wonder book of nature spreads open to our gaze its brilliant pages.

As Summer departs, the winds are freshly blowing, and the Autumn has come with its rich fruitage. The spirit of the year, risen violet-crowned from the pure snows of Winter, and expanded into the glories of Summer's radiant noon, now brings to us her golden



sheaves and luscious fruits. The roses that blossomed along her pathway have faded away; but, like the good deeds of charity, their perfume, like a memory, still loads the atmosphere with their fragrance. Yes, the sad refrain is,—

“The birds have ceased their singing; sheafed is the  
golden corn;  
The bees have ceased their winging ’mid flowers at  
early morn.”

Scores of eloquent passages might be cited from our bards, but we scarcely need the inspiration of their utterances. Nature herself is an all-potent inspiration. While wandering, in imagination, in the leafy lanes, and among the anemones which love to grow in wood-shaded nooks, or little openings between the trees where the dark-blue hyacinths and the fair and fragrant violets delight to blow, we also note the fading and falling beauties of leafy autumn, strewed along our pathway. Thus frail and fleeting is the cherished gift of beauty. Yet is there compensation; since, though frail, these —

“Leaves of all hues, — green, gold, and red, — ruins  
of summer bowers,  
Ye look almost as beautiful as did her choicest  
flowers.”

Autumn, that "season of mist and mellow fruitfulness," has been styled the sabbath of the year; yet Bryant, it will be remembered, sings thus mournfully:—

"The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year;  
 And wailing winds and naked woods, and meadow brown and sere."

The sere and yellow leaf now greets us, where, a short time since, all was verdant and blooming with floral glories, and Nature has doffed her gay attire; yet is there great beauty, even in her blanched and frozen fields and streams. Shelley has sung sweetly the dirge of the dying year:—

"The warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,  
 The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying;  
 Come, months, come away; in your saddest array  
 Follow the bier of the dead, cold year."

One of the most beautiful objects in a Winter landscape is the holly-bush, hung with bright green leaves and crimson berries.

"Gone are the Summer hours, the birds have left the bowers,  
 While the holly-tree retains its hue, nor changes like the flowers.

On its armed leaf reposes the berries, red as roses ;  
'Tis always seen in red and green, while grim old  
Winter dozes ;  
It awakens old affections, in Christmas recollec-  
tions ;  
And as it glows, a soft veil throws o'er all our  
imperfections."

"Holly, ivy, and mistletoe are English household words ; though ivy is not used so much now in our Christmas decorations as in former years. It is the greatest ornament that Time throws around his ruins, seeming as if he had a wish to bury the dead past out of his sight, and cover the remains with something green and beautiful. Dreary indeed would be the dark days of Winter, were they not illumined by the domestic fireside groups, and the joyous gatherings and greetings of its festive seasons of Christmas and the advent of the new year."

Thus have "the seasons and their change" glided in their glowing beauty, but all too swiftly, before the mental vision. To a reflective mind, these alternations suggest many an instructive and admonitory hint. Summer's radiant skies and golden sunsets

remind us of the sunlit hours of social life, while the briefer days of darkness and storm reflect our intervals of affliction and sorrow. Both conditions alike conserve our highest interests, as well in the kingdom of morals as of physics.

Each of the four seasons has its own peculiar charm and beauty, and blesses us with its influence.

“For years and seasons as they run;  
For winter’s cloud and summer’s sun;  
For seed-time and for autumn’s store,  
In due succession evermore;  
For flower and fruit, for herb and tree,—  
Lord, we are thankful unto thee.”

In surveying thus cursively the rotation of the seasons, we naturally think of the rapid flight of Time, — itself, indeed, but a myth or shadow, and yet, being coeval with life itself, our most valuable possession. What is its lesson?

“I asked the golden sun and silver spheres, —  
Those bright chronometers of days and years.  
They answer, ‘Time is but a meteor’s glare,’  
And bade me for eternity prepare.

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I asked the seasons, in their annual round, —  
Which beautify or desolate the ground, —  
And they replied (no oracle more wise!),  
'Tis folly's blank, and wisdom's highest prize.' "

We have to confess: "We take no note of time, but from its loss." Although we cannot possibly arrest its progress, we may yet stop a minute, and consider its value.

## PHYSIOGNOMY.

“LIFE HATH ITS LEGEND IN EVERY LOOK.”



ON meeting with “friend, neighbor, or acquaintance,” we instinctively look the person in the face, because in it we expect to find *prima facie* evidence of character. Nor are we often disappointed. The face is to the individual what the title page is to the book, or the dial to the watch,—an index to what is within. Another analogy is seen in the facial varieties of the lower orders of creation, and we need not wonder that similar varieties are equally apparent among “the paragon of animals.” Let us, then, examine the “human face divine” in detail, and scan some of its protean diversities. Wrote an acknowledged authority, “No study, mathematics excepted, more justly deserves to be termed a science than physiognomy. We all have some sort of intuitive method by which we form our opinions; and though our rules for judging

of men from their appearance may sometimes fail, we still continue to trust in them, and naturally feel surprised if a vacant-looking man should prove extremely sagacious, or a morose-looking one should give us evidence of his kind disposition by performing some generous and disinterested action. There is an almost universal standard of correspondencies between the facial expression, and the interior souls of men; yet it is admitted that the criteria by which we judge are, to some extent, liable to error, being controlled by the ever-varying circumstances and differences of the habits and idiosyncrasies of men."

Faces are as legible as books, with this difference in their favor, that they may be perused in much less time than printed pages, and are less liable to be misunderstood. The body and the mind — the sign and the thing signified — correspond; in the visible, the invisible is, to a great extent, revealed. Let us look our subject in the face, and, according to our instinctive custom, look into the eyes, — those "windows of the soul." How eloquently they speak!

It has been well said, "Speech is a laggard and a sloth, but the eyes shoot out an electric fluid that condenses all the elements of sentiment and passion in one single emanation. Conceive what a boundless range of feeling is included between the two extremes of the look serene and the smooth brow, and the contracted frown with the glaring eye. What varieties of sentiment in the mere fluctuation of its lustre, from the fiery flash of indignation to the twinkle of laughter, the soft beaming of compassion, and the melting radiance of love !"

"Ye who know the reason, tell us how it is that  
instinct still  
Prompts the heart to like, or dislike, at its own  
capricious will.  
Why should smiles sometimes repel us, bright  
eyes turn our feelings cold?  
What the secret power that tells us, all that glitters  
is not gold?"

But the visual organs deserve yet closer scrutiny : they should be examined, not physiologically, but philosophically and poetically ; since a brace of bright eyes has had much to answer for, from the days of Helen of Troy



down to this present time. Whatever of goodness emanates from the soul, gathers its soft halo in the eyes ; and if the heart be a lurking-place of crime, the eyes are sure to betray the secret. A beautiful eye makes silence eloquent, a kind eye makes contradiction an assent, an enraged eye makes beauty deformity : so you see, forsooth, the little organ plays no inconsiderable, if not a dominant, part. What purity and innocence beam from the eye of a child ! How it glows with the radiancy of light and love ! — pity it should ever become clouded !

As to the æsthetic discussion of “starry eyes,” the poets and the painters are much divided in their choice between the lustrous brilliancy of the dark, and the softer glow caught from the azure sky above us. How shall we decide their claims ?

“There’s witchery in the eyes of brown, and sometimes softness too ;

But gentleness, we ne’er forget, in the calm eyes of blue.”

From eyes, the descent is easy and natural to noses. The nasal is a prominent feature

in the face ; and yet it is a noticeable fact, that, however correct and upright may be its owner, the nose is rarely, if ever, quite straightforward : so that the claim seems to involve a contradiction, since every one is said to follow, or be led by, the nose. Noses are of great variety as to size and shape ; but it is not necessary to describe them, as they are ever protruding themselves upon our notice. There is supposed to be an index of character in a nose ; and, when the organ is well developed, it has been judged indicative of strength of character. Some rhymester, whose name has escaped our memory, thus facetiously dilates upon this foremost and leading feature of the face :—

“ How very odd that poets should suppose  
 There is no poetry about a nose,  
 When, plain as is man’s nose upon his face,  
 A nose-less face would lack poetic grace !  
 Noses have sympathy, a lover knows !  
 Noses are always touched when lips are kissing ;  
 And who would care to kiss, if nose were missing ?  
 Why, what would be the fragrance of a rose,  
 And where would be the mortal means of telling  
 Whether a vile or wholesome odor flows  
 Around us, if we owned no sense of smelling ?

I know a nose, — a nose no other knows, —  
'Neath starry eyes, o'er ruby lips it grows ;  
Beauty its form, and music in its blows."

More might be said about noses, were it necessary ; indeed, a book has been published on "Nasology," of nearly three hundred pages, — a fact that of itself ought to inspire us with great respect for that leading feature in all faces. This writer seems to insist that there is truth in the theory of certain noses being indicative of character, and assigns to the Romano-Greek nose the greatest honor and distinction.

Noses are indicative of character, doubtless since there are many distinctive varieties of them, such as the graceful, or aquiline ; the Roman, or heroic ; and the bottle-nose, from its owner's proclivity to intemperance in drinking. There are many other minor distinctions of the nasal organ, but they need not be defined. The nose is not only a prominent and central feature of the face, but it is a very useful and essential auxiliary in daily life. By its nice discriminations we distinguish odors ; and as with the palate, are we governed in matters of taste by its decis-

ions. From the nose we descend to the mouth, — a yet more indispensable member, since it is not only the organ of speech, but the inlet to the inexorable stomach, which is so frequent in its demands upon our attention. But this feature in the face of beauty is, by its laws, required to be small ; and it would be both ungallant and useless for us to attempt to enlarge upon it. There is one mark of honorable distinction that social usage has conferred upon the mouth, which might be mentioned, — that of kissing. How many plighted vows and pledges of affection have been ratified and sealed with a kiss ! But of lovers' sighs that are breathed through the lips, it belongs not to the purport of this paper to speak.

Nature has endowed us with dual organs in some, but not all, instances : while we have two eyes and two ears, we have but one nose and one mouth. But we ought to be content and thankful for the wonderful equipments we possess, and make the best use of them, since they are indispensable endowments, as well as ornamental.

What a mystery appertains to our organs

of sense, — those “five gateways of knowledge!” They are not only the media of our enjoyment, but also of our intelligence, and intercourse with one another and with the objects of the outer world. By the visual organ we read the illuminated book of nature ; and by the auditory nerve we are enabled to enjoy the thrilling harmonies of music and the gentle accents of kindly speech, as well as the ever welcome songs of the minstrels of the woods.

In passing along the crowded thoroughfares of the city, the physiognomist has an opportunity of studying the almost unlimited varieties of faces, from the classic mould of beauty to the opposite, of deformity. It is the prerogative of virtuous age to wear a kind of spiritual beauty ; and yet even the happiest do not always evince their happiness in their faces, nor the sorrowing ones their griefs.

Among the multitudinous groups that pass along, not a few have the impress of care and trouble, and some even in early life ; while others flit by us with gayety and the glow of happiness, not only in the jocund spring-time, but occasionally in the late autumn of life,

who seem to retain much of their youthful vivacity.

Even if features are not handsome, the *contour* may be pleasing if lighted up with good temper; and it has been well said that smiles are always much more becoming than frowns. Even "a homely face" may be illuminated by a smile. Who does not indorse these lyric lines of a modern minstrel?

"Some faces are supremely fair, some sparkling in  
 their splendor;  
 Some are demure, some *debonair*, and some divinely  
 tender.  
 Some win us with a fatal glance from eyes too  
 brightly beaming;  
 Some witching smiles hearts so entrance, that life  
 is lost in dreaming.  
 And some, some faces sorrow-kissed, when holiest  
 thoughts are thronging,  
 Come back, — come always in the mist of everlasting  
 longing."

"What can be more significant than the sudden flushing and confusion of a blush, than the sparklings of rage, and the lightnings of a smile? The soul is, as it were, visible upon these occasions; the passions ebb and flow in the cheeks, and are much better distin-

guished in their progress than the change of the air in a weather-glass. A face well furnished out by nature, and a little disciplined, has a great deal of rhetoric in it. A graceful presence bespeaks acceptance, gives a force to language, and helps to convince by look and posture.”<sup>1</sup>

For example, there is the earnest and energetic glance of the American ; the slower and graver aspect of the British ; the mercurial vivacity of the French ; and the phlegmatic lethargy of the German, whose philosophic mind, dwelling in “the realm of the higher thought,” sees nothing clearly, except through the cloudy envelope of smoke.

Some writer has said, “There is no single object presented to our senses which engrosses so large a share of our thoughts, emotions, and associations, as that small portion of flesh and blood a hand may cover, and which constitutes the human face. There is nothing we gaze upon with such admiration, think of with so much fondness, long for with such yearning, and remember with such fidelity ; nothing that gladdens us

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremy Collier.

with such magic power, haunts us with such fearful pertinacity, — common as it is, meeting us at every turn.” The face is not like the hand or the foot: it is the only, the universally accepted proof of identity; and it is the sole proof of it which is instantaneous, — an evidence not collected by effort, but constantly recognizable. What bewildering confusions and fatal mistakes would inevitably result to society at large, were it otherwise! This instinctive faculty, by which we identify our fellow-creatures by their faces, leads us to discriminate their characters. Thus our faces may be said to be our friends or our foes, according to facial developments. What we should do without faces, is a problem the reader is at liberty to solve for himself.



## THE MYSTERY OF MUSIC.



THE natural history of music is a profound mystery. Its empire is the emotions, and its results are the most refining and inspiring upon the race. Its origin, or source, must be sought in the depths of our being; at every step we advance in the inquiry, we but decipher what is written within us, not transcribing any thing from without. Music has a history, too, full of marvels: it fascinates not only human hearts and ears, but most of the subordinate creatures.

Still the question returns, What is Music? and it is as old as all history, classic and modern. Many theories have been offered. Herbert Spencer supposes, that "all music was originally vocal; and that all vocal sounds being produced by the agency of muscles, and that muscles are subject to contraction by pleasurable or painful sensations, therefore,

feeling demonstrates itself in sound as well as in motion. The muscles that move the chest, larynx, and vocal chords, contracting like other muscles in proportion to the intensity of the feelings ; every different contraction of these muscles involving, as it does, a different adjustment of the vocal organs, causing a change in the sound emitted ; and it follows that all kinds of vocal expression must be sought in this general relation between mental and muscular excitements." To which hypothesis, it has been urged by another authority,<sup>1</sup> that "music is not a human invention, but is part and parcel of nature. The laws of vibration, for instance, are as immutable as are those of gravity. The forms of vibration are determined by the great mechanical law of the parallelogram of forces. The manner in which a string vibrates is one of the most wonderful things in nature. The human ear is of a most marvellous and intricate construction ; and its wonders and complications have for the *sole* object the distinguishing of musical sounds, with regard to pitch and quality : a comparatively simple arrangement

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<sup>1</sup> Rice.

would have sufficed for the requirements of language. There is the human throat, with its remarkable arrangement for the purpose of *song* alone. A far inferior construction would have served the purpose of language, or for the production of sound incidental to muscular excitement. But leaving the consideration of special contrivances, and casting our eyes on the broad expanse of nature, what an enormous provision is made for music ! What an immense material is placed under its control ! It can subject to its use almost all things that exist in space. The atmosphere ever prone to originate music, is always prepared to mediate between the producing instrument and the ear. Water, too, is an originator and mediator of musical sounds. All solid bodies have a proneness for music. Before man appeared on the face of the earth, the waves of the Ægean sea sang their mournful tones ; the waters sounded forth sad music, as they rushed through Fingal's Cave, or spent themselves in violent breakers on the German shore. Did not singing birds exist before the time of man ? Did they evolve their singing from speech, or did they develop it from

muscular excitement, or did they sing because it was natural for them to sing? And the original man sang before he talked. Music is natural : language is artificial. Language is local : music is universal. Music is greatly aided by language, but it does not depend upon it : rather, language depends on music."

"Who is there, however, that can, in logical words, express the effect music has on us?" asks Carlyle : and he thus attempts the answer : "A kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that!" Luther, who was a great lover of music for its own sweet sake, believed it possessed an exorcising power over evil spirits. He defined music as the art of the prophets, the only art that can calm the agitations of the soul, and one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us."

"Our joys below it can improve,  
And antedate the bliss above."

Music, apart from words, expresses sentiments and emotions which fill the mind with

sensations of indefinable pleasure. When linked with words, it becomes an eloquent and beautiful illustration of language : —

“Music! oh, how faint, how weak,  
Language fails before thy spell!”

Wrote Legh Richmond, “I am persuaded that music is designed to prepare for heaven, to educate for the choral enjoyment of paradise.” It cannot be questioned, that, of all delights to those who have the gift or taste for it, music is the most exquisite.

In the Bible, the invention of musical instruments is ascribed to Jubal, as being the “father of such as handle harp and organ.” The invention of instruments, at this early age of the world, implies the previous existence of vocal music. It is impossible to determine exactly what kind of instruments may have been then known, which the translators have rendered “harp and organ.” During the reigns of David and Solomon, the most splendid period of Jewish history, this art seems to have been at its height among that people. David was himself a musician; and his inspired lyrics, the Psalms, were set

to music under his direction. Music, like other arts, had attained to some cultivation in Egypt, and from thence to Greece and Rome. According to Homer, music was in constant use during the Trojan war.

In the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are many exquisite descriptions of the divine art, and its fascinating power. Music has its association in morals as an art, its right and its wrong, its high and its low, like painting and sculpture, poetry, etc. There is also a mystery about it which baffles our scrutiny; because, while we know how sound may be produced, we yet cannot explain how it produces the effect it does upon us. Elemental sounds are familiar to us, — the moaning of the wind, or the monotone of surging sea-waves. But a noise is not a musical note, nor the distant roar of a tumultuous city the same as the musical changes of a peal of bells. The human ear is sensible alike to sounds concordant and discordant. "The quality of music," it is said, "depends on the mode of vibration, the number, order, and intensity of the vibrations of the over-tones in a 'clang,' which determine *timbre* or quality,

and make the differences between the same note sounded on a violin, piano, harp, and flute." Music was held in the highest estimation among the Greeks: it was deemed an accomplishment fitting the highest rank and gravest character. It is stated on good authority, that the Greek music was, like the Scottish, inspired by mountain scenery and heroic action.

Sacred music formed an important part of the ritual of ancient worship; and such it has ever continued, both of the Jewish and Christian churches. In the Romish Communion this is especially true, it being cultivated in a very elaborate and artistic manner in all countries. About the middle of the fourth century, regular choirs were introduced into the churches: these were divided into two parts, and made to sing alternately or responsively. This was called antiphonal singing: and in this species of music, a certain phrase of melody, after having been sung by one portion of the choristers, is echoed by the others, at certain distances, and at a higher or lower pitch; and the successive accumulation of these different masses of sound,



into one grand and harmonious whole, produces the greatest effects of which music is susceptible. Of such effects, sublime instances are to be found in the choruses of Handel and of other great masters.

Secular music was much cultivated in England during the sixteenth century. Queen Elizabeth herself was a musician ; and a MS. book of music, known as her "Virginal book," is still preserved in the British Museum. Mary of Scotland, the unfortunate queen, was also an accomplished musician.

Every civilized nation has its characteristic music, as it has its vernacular speech. Each composer, also, has his own special charm : Mozart, Handel, Beethoven, Bach, Mendelssohn, Haydn, Wagner, and others thrill us with such delicious strains as —

"Dissolve our souls in ecstasies,  
And bring all heaven before our eyes!"

It is related of Beethoven, who has contributed so largely to the delight of mankind by his musical skill, that he had but one happy moment in his life, and that killed him. He lived in poverty and seclusion, without friends



or succor of any kind ; and yet he spoke to the world in strains of the sublimest melody, to which his contemporaries would not deign to listen. He became deaf, to add to his misfortunes. Living at Baden in Germany, he was accustomed to wander about a neighboring forest, alone with the birds ; and there he composed some of his grand symphonies.

Hawthorne, referring to the music of a cathedral organ in the distance, says : “ It thrills through my heart with a pleasure both of the sense and spirit. Heaven be praised, though I know nothing of music as a science, the most elaborate harmonies, if they please me, please as simply as a nurse’s lullaby ! ”

The magic power of music is seen in its effects upon infancy, as well as matured life. “ Mozart, when only three years old, would strike thirds on the clavichord, and incline his little face smilingly to the harmony of the vibrations.” No other art probably has ever had such early proficient and prodigies.

When Paganini — whose great feat was to play on one string only — once came before

an auditory with his music, he found that his violin had been removed, and a coarser instrument substituted for it. Discovering the trick, he said to the audience, "Now I will show you that the music is not in my violin, but in me." Music is a test of the culture of an age, and is ubiquitous, by its nature, as poetry; for its vernacular tongue is common to mankind. Music in its nature is social: it can enter every home, alike of the poor and the rich. Music is one of the glories of the eighteenth century: "the whole gamut of music (except the plain-song, part-song, dance, and mass) is the creation of the eighteenth century."

Music is the language, not of thought, but of the affections. Does not maternal tenderness vibrate with its melodies, and the interchange of loving regard find its truest expression in song? Does not martial music, also, fire the heart of the patriot to the fray; and the solemn strains of devotion lift the soul to ecstasy and the upper sphere? The domestic circle is no less witness to its softening and inspiring influences,—its joy-awakening power and sympathetic charm.

“The heart is stirred by each glad bird,  
Whose notes are heard in summer bowers ;  
And song gives birth to friendly mirth  
Around the hearth in wintry hours.  
Man first learned song in paradise,  
From the bright angels o'er him singing ;  
And in our home above the skies  
Glad anthems are forever ringing.  
Then should we sing while yet we may, —  
Like him God loved, the sweet-toned Psalmist,  
Who found in harp and holy lay  
The charm that keeps the spirit calmest.”<sup>1</sup>

What an indispensable auxiliary to our social enjoyment is music ! Not only is it efficacious to charm away physical sickness and moody melancholy, but it also is the accompaniment of the birth, the banquet, and the burial. Music is said to bear the same relation to song that poetry does to language : it is the harmonizer of society, and one of the essentials of life.

“Music! whate'er it be, whose subtle power  
Steals to the soul, as dew into the flower, —  
A circling gush of thin and tremulous air,  
Like quick expanding wave-struck waters bear ;  
Dying, when past, as some frail spoken spell,  
To rove, a ghost, in memory's shadowy cell ;

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<sup>1</sup> G. W. Bethune.

A sky-born messenger on silvery wing,  
Floating or sweeping ; a triumphant thing !  
Whate'er it be, 'twas given when time began,  
To soothe creation's heart, and ravish man ;  
A world-embracing language all might know,  
To prompt joy's smile, or chase the tear of woe."

It has been well said, that "we may sit unmoved during the recital of the finest verses ; but the moment the harper's fingers sweep the strings, the melody rouses us to a fine fanaticism. The song was body before : it is now soul ; its harmonies are complete ; and to every march of the melody the heart-strings throb responsive. Nature is double all through, — body and soul, matter and spirit, — as if the universe were a repeated marriage of the two elements. To the fertility of the fields, is added beauty of tint, form, and color. The brown soil has a soul, and that soul is the flower which would exist in vain were there no other souls to make common cause with its life and history. To man — the prose of the world — is added women, its poetry.

Nature pushes up toward the region of poetry in sound as she does in color. As she

weaves rainbows from the fragments of a falling cloud, so she struggles to weave music from every voice of animate and inanimate things.”<sup>1</sup> Plato said the soul of man was itself a harmony, and had its nearest sympathies in music.

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<sup>1</sup> Hibberd.

## THE SURVIVAL OF BOOKS.



THE survival of the fittest, as a general rule, applies as directly to books as to any thing in nature. The products of the mind, characterized as they are by an almost unlimited variety as to worth and power, are necessarily governed by that law as to their durability; hence we find that scarcely any, comparatively, of the multitude of books published ever attain to much celebrity, or even outlive a decade of years, while still fewer are found to possess the elements of an enduring fame. Instances in confirmation of this are so numerous and patent that it seems almost superfluous to cite any illustrations of the fact. Yet, as every thing connected with the history of literature is so intimately allied with our social and intellectual life as to be always interesting, a few of the most noteworthy examples will be presented.

Homer and Virgil, as representatives of the culture and poetic inspiration of their respective eras, — the one in Greek and the other in Latin literature, — have not only shed lustre upon their own, but upon all the subsequent ages, while they seem destined to survive through all time, in the grand galaxy of the classic writers.

In an able paper speaking of classic literature, President Seelye asks, "Can there be such a thing as literary immortality? A considerable number of writers actually have lived in memory two thousand years; and these writers, though in general pure in style, are not in all cases of quite transcendent merit. I mean, of course, the Greek and Latin classics. Livy has lived two thousand years, and why should not Macaulay expect to do so? Southey might fancy himself not inferior to Statius or Valerius Flaccus. Now, these ancient classics are kept, by our system of education, always before our minds. The importance that is still assigned to them, the prodigious amount of industry that is still bestowed upon them, after two thousand years, cannot escape us, and cannot fail to

give rise to a theory, more or less unconscious and vague, of the fates that attend books, and of the immortality that awaits some books. . . . Now, no similar prospect lies before the writers of the modern world. We may expect that literature will have a long, continuous life, during which it will never sink below a certain level, will not be barbarized or disabled by the want of a serviceable language, and in which the writings of each period will be preserved securely, since libraries will not be burned by Norsemen or Arabs. Now, these are wholly different conditions from those which have conferred immortality upon the ancients. . . . Each generation has now its own writers, and what a multitude of writers ! Against such an overwhelming competition of new books, it is difficult to imagine how old books can bear up. At least, in no former age have candidates for literary immortality been situated so disadvantageously."

It may be worth while to refer to the strange and sometimes erratic criticisms which, of course, had a controlling influence on the fate of the publications of the time.



By reference to the old critical journals, we find scathingly condemned works that yet are regarded as worthy of a place in the library, and *vice versa*. “Denham’s ‘Cooper’s Hill’ was described as a poem, which, for the majesty of the style, is, and ever will be, the exact standard of good writing. ‘Pamela,’ says a critic, next to the Bible, ought to be preserved. Home, because he wrote ‘Douglas,’ was dubbed ‘the Scottish Shakspeare;’ and the critics of the time seem to have considered him even superior to the great bard. How many writers included in Johnson’s ‘Lives of the Poets’ do we read to-day? On the other hand, taking a few instances at random, the critics could see no genius in Lytton, Tennyson’s first volume of poems was ridiculed by one of the reviews, and Lord Beaconsfield’s early attempts were regarded as ‘indications of literary lunacy.’ The fate of Keats is almost too hackneyed to quote: referring to him, Byron wrote:—

‘Tis strange the mind, that fiery particle,  
Should let itself be snuffed out by an article.’

Byron's mind was evidently not 'snuffed out' by the slashing review his first volume of poems received."<sup>1</sup>

What universal favorites are still Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe," Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," and Fielding's, Swift's, Richardson's, Smollett's, and Charles Lamb's works, with many others. Yet Johnson could see no genius in Fielding. Tastes differ with the objects of taste, with respect to books as to works of art and things in general. Dr. Johnson's pompous verbosity was, however, a standing joke among some of his contemporaries; and although Boswell regarded his opinions as of the highest authority, he has not been, in every instance, sustained or regarded as unimpeachable.

Mrs. Hannah More's "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," a semi-religious novel, was, perhaps, the most popular book of its time; about thirty thousand copies having been sold in England, and a similar number in America. It was translated into the principal languages of the continent of Europe, and the East. Some of her other productions were very

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<sup>1</sup> All the Year Round.

successful ; and she not only acquired by her writings a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, but the most distinguished honors were paid to her by the British Court and nobility. Yet the literature, judged by the standard of modern criticism, is far from evincing any remarkable power : it seems to have gained favor by its moral teaching.

Latter-day critics find it difficult to account for the immense success of "*Ye Schyppe of Fooles*," the great work of Sebastian Brant, at the time of its publication, in 1497, at Basile. Editions followed each other in rapid succession, although, on account of its woodcuts, it could not have been a very cheap book. This work, quaint and curious to the literary antiquary, is not now thought of ; and yet it was a foremost satirical work in its day. It is known as the first printed book that treated of contemporary events and persons. Sir Philip Sidney's "*Arcadia*" was universally read and eulogized at the time of its publication, as giving an impulse to the taste for romantic literature. "*Don Quixote*" was a similar instance of spontaneous success at the time of its appearance, and it may be said to

retain its hold upon the popular favor to this day ; not so, however, with the "Arcadia."

Of Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," seven thousand copies were sold within six days of its publication ; and within a few years more than thirty thousand copies were demanded. Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel" passed through five editions in a year. "The effect it produced was unprecedented, though it failed of its immediate object, — that of prejudicing the public mind against Shaftesbury, then awaiting in the Tower the presentation of the bill of indictment against him." Gibbon's famous history of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" was another instance of literary triumph. On the other hand, "Paul and Virginia," by St. Pierre, although after a time it was received with popular favor, at first was snubbed and tabooed by society-folk. Scott's novels and romances were great favorites on their first appearance, and they are yet with persons of cultured taste. "Of all modern works, perhaps Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was the most notable instance of success, and the most marvellous literary phenomenon the

world had witnessed. The London publishers, it is said, furnished to one house ten thousand copies a day for about four weeks, and had to employ a thousand persons in preparing copies for the general demand. It was computed that more than one million of copies were sold in England alone. It has been translated into most of the leading languages of Europe, and dramatized in numerous towns of the Old and New World. Of the success in America of this remarkable work, it may suffice to state that a similar amount of copies is believed to have been in circulation.”<sup>1</sup> Of course this work owes much of its wonderful success to its opportune appearance,—the great agitation then prevailing in both nations on the question of the abolition of slavery. Without alluding briefly to the “*Pilgrim’s Progress*” of John Bunyan, this rapid and almost random sketch of books that have, and have not, achieved a literary triumph, would be incomplete. Like Shakespeare’s, the name of Bunyan is familiar as an household word ; both hold us spell-bound by the force of their genius. Yet, in each

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<sup>1</sup> F. Jacox.

instance, their advent upon the world of letters was without any special notice or regard, — Shakspeare's collective dramas having been first published in 1623, seven years after the death of the author ; and in the case of Bunyan, when he was only just liberated from his cruel and unjust incarceration. But, like the rising of the dawn, the light of these masters of drama and allegory has been steadily increasing to the full-orbed brightness of our day.

As a representative work of its order, Walton's "Complete Angler," at its first appearance, did not excite any particular notice. The first edition was issued in 1653, at one shilling and sixpence sterling, a copy of which, however, was sold at auction in 1882 for thirty guineas. Editions almost innumerable have since been published ; and, at the present time, the work may be had for ten cents in miniature form, or in the most elaborately and elegantly illustrated style for about six guineas.

The last instance claiming notice is that of "De Imitatione Christi," of Thomas à Kempis. Of this world-renowned work, we

quote the following particulars from "The London Athenæum : " —

"In collecting the 'De Imitatione Christi,' Edmund Waterton had, up to the time of his death, succeeded in bringing together between eleven hundred and twelve hundred different editions in various languages ; and for some years before his death he had been engaged on writing a history of the book."

This work has been many times translated into the civilized languages of Europe, including the Greek and Hebrew. Over sixty versions have appeared in French ; and to compute the whole number of the several editions that have been published, has baffled the most careful attempts at calculation. Next to the Bible, — which has been translated into two hundred and sixty-seven languages and dialects, and of which about two hundred millions of copies, or portions of the Scriptures, have been published, — this production of the monk Thomas, who was born at Kempen on the Rhine in 1379, takes rank.

The cynic or critic may claim that most



writers are apt to place too high an estimate upon their own literary productions; yet it may be questioned whether this weakness is exclusively applicable to the literary profession. It has been well said that a just estimate of one's self is necessary for maintaining a proper self-respect; and every one is supposed to be conscious of his own power and qualifications. A longing for literary immortality has been satirically styled "drawing in imagination upon the future for that homage which the present refuses to pay,—at best, a protracted oblivion." Some vainglorious poet is reported to have boasted that his poems would be read when Dryden and Pope were forgotten; "but not till then," was the rejoinder.

A refined and virtuous ambition is perhaps, of all human passions, the most seductive and imposing; nor is it ever to be deprecated. Cowley wrote, "I love and commend a true, good fame because it is the shadow of virtue; not that it doth any good to the body which it accompanies, but it is an efficacious shadow, and, like that of St. Peter, cures the diseases of others." This



love of human applause also incites to noble and heroic deeds.

“The love of praise, howe'er concealed by art,  
Reigns, more or less, and glows in every heart.”

Writing to Swift and Pope as poets, Bolingbroke says, “You teach our self-love to anticipate the applause which we suppose will be paid by posterity to our names, and with the idle notions of immortality you turn other heads besides your own.” Chateaubriand once asked his friend if he knew why antiquity has left us in literature nothing but masterpieces, or at least very remarkable productions, nor paused for a reply, but gave as the reason, that Time, the best of critics, has dealt out justice to mediocrities by putting them out of sight, out of mind. Time is the crucible which tests the true value of every literary production. Despite the stern decisions of fate, no one seems to be proof against the alluring fascinations of fame. Comparatively few are insensible to the charm of human applause: it is right that it should be so; since it is not only an incentive to virtue, but to its twin-sister industry.

“The proud to gain it, toils on toils endure ;  
The modest shun it, but to make it sure.”

The quintessence of fame, it has been suggested, is the loving admiration of one's own family circle, since it is an accepted axiom, that “a prophet is not without honor save among his own kindred ;” yet in the popular acceptation of fame, contemporary or posthumous, such a limitation is far too contracted for the vaulting ambition of mankind.

“Fame's loud clarion, that most bewitches men, —  
O popular applause! what heart of man  
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?”

## LIFE'S LITTLE DAY.



THE advent of the new year is usually ushered in with winter's icy breath, its snow-clad landscapes and its clouded skies ; but it nevertheless is the harbinger and prophecy of the glorious spring with its sunny skies, its fragrant breath of buds and blossoms, and its joyous melodies of the feathered minstrels.

“The night is mother of the day, the winter of the spring ;” and we soon forget the frigidity of the one season, in the genial atmosphere of the other. Both are necessary, like the alternations of day and night, in the economy of nature ; “for seed-time and harvest, summer and winter,” are among the ordinances of the beneficent Creator. By the same law is our own life determined. Life's little day has not only its alternations of bright and darkened hours, but its budding infancy and buoyant youth, its maturity and

mellow autumn-time. What a fascination there is in infancy and childhood !

“ Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
     Upon the growing boy ;  
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows.  
     He sees it in his joy.  
 The youth, who daily farther from the east  
 Must travel, still is Nature’s priest,  
     And by the vision splendid  
     Is on his way attended.  
 At length the man perceives it die away,  
 And fade into the light of common day.”<sup>1</sup>

Childhood is the poetic period of our human life : like the fresh buds and flowers of spring, the dear little children are the blossoms of home-life. The presence of children not only softens, charms, and refines our hearts, but there is about them a spell that holds us captive to their artless and winning ways. They brighten home, deepen its affection, and kindle afresh the courtesies and gentle charities of life. What a barren waste would life become without the presence of the little charmers !

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<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth.

It is somewhere said, that children are sent to us for more purposes than to make up the home circle : they prevent us from growing prematurely old, and keep alive in our hearts the graces of love and affection. Be afraid of a person whom children shrink from. Cherish and make much of little children ; remember a nation's hope was once found in a basket of bulrushes ! Never let it be forgotten that " He who came from heaven has put the seal of his perpetual benediction upon childhood." The sunny smile and the artless lisplings of infancy are indeed a benison from heaven ; for the eye has caught its brilliant hue, and the voice its glad harmony. So much for childhood's happy hour. What shall we say of boyhood ? Perhaps it will suffice to cite Saxe's opinion on the subject, which is as follows :—

"The proper study of mankind is man ;  
The most perplexing one, no doubt, is woman ;  
The subtlest study the mind can scan,  
Of all deep problems, heavenly or human.  
But of all studies in the round of learning,  
From nature's marvels down to human toys,  
To minds well fitted for acute discerning,  
The very queerest one is that of boys !

“ If to ask questions that would puzzle Plato,  
 And all the schoolmen of the middle age ;  
 If to make precepts worthy of old Cato,  
 Be deemed philosophy, — your boy’s a sage !

“ If a strong will and most courageous bearing,  
 If to be cruel as the Roman Nero,  
 If all that’s chivalrous, and all that’s daring,  
 Can make a hero, — then the boy’s a hero.  
 But changing soon with his increasing stature,  
 The boy is lost in manhood’s riper age ;  
 And with him goes his former boyhood nature,  
 No longer is he hero now, nor sage !”

Yet are they not happy, those days of life’s  
 young dawn, — free from care, and buoyant  
 with hope.

Hope is to the boy what memory is to the  
 man. It has been said, that, at twenty years  
 of age, the will reigns ; at thirty, the wit ; and  
 afterwards, the judgment. And Shakspeare  
 adds this wise suggestion, —

“ O gentlemen, the time of life is short !  
 To spend that shortness basely, were too long.”

Youth is usually impatient to reach man-  
 hood, and adults are as anxious to retain their  
 youth ; but the timepiece of old Chronos

never stops. Cicero was for a youth that had something of the old in him, and for an elderly person with something of the youth in him. When the noon of life's day has passed, and the shadowy tints of eventide gather around us, we naturally seek retirement and repose. If, haply, the antecedent hours of active service have been well spent, and the heart has escaped uninjured through the dangers of a seductive world, it may then prove the most happy period of existence, — like the viol which yields a melody sweet in proportion to its age. A well-spent life insures a calm and serene old age.

The phrase "battle of life" is usually supposed to apply to the struggle which is all the time going on throughout the civilized world for the possession of its honors, or its wealth, as well as the stern conflict which unfortunately prevails, even with many, for the necessities of existence. There is, however, another fight being constantly waged, between the moral forces of right and wrong, of which every reflective mind is but too painfully conscious; and no less true is it, that there is a physical warfare carried on between life and

death in our bodies. It has been said, that, no sooner do we begin to live, than we tend to death. If we ask the scientist to define for us that mystic thing we call life, his reply is, "the sum of all the forces that resist death." So it seems that life and death are not only nearly allied, but in constant antagonism.

Thomas Fuller says, "He lives long, that lives well; and time mis-spent is not lived, but lost." Carlyle, in his usual grave and nervous manner, writes: "Think of living! thy life, wert thou the pitifullest of all the sons of earth, is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own; it is all thou hast to front eternity with."

"Is life worth the living?" has been ungraciously asked; and the response has been facetiously given, "That depends upon the *liver*." But the question is a momentous one, and demands a serious answer.

"Life itself, indeed, is an enigma which has not been unravelled, — a problem not yet solved. It is not our personal property; we have no title to it in fee simple, but hold it only in usufruct. It is entailed strictly. We cannot alienate it, nor cut off the entail.



Its durability is a question that is, to a great extent, determined or modified by personal peculiarity, idiosyncrasy, habit, custom, manners, mode of living, and occupation. It is also affected by climate, and the law of heredity. There can be little doubt, however, that a healthful soul enshrined in a healthy body has much to do with a happy and protracted existence." <sup>1</sup> The habit of looking habitually on the sunny side of things is worth more than a thousand pounds a year to a person of a misanthropic temperament. It has been said that there are far more who die of selfishness and idleness, than overwork. It is indolence which exhausts, by allowing the entrance of fretful thoughts into the mind; not action, in which there is health and pleasure. "We live in deeds," said Bailey, "not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on a dial. He most lives, who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

Character is the governing element in life, and is above genius. It has been often affirmed that the two govern the world; but

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<sup>1</sup> Dickson.

one commands our admiration, while the other secures our esteem and respect. There are many persons of whom it may be said that they have no possession in the world but their character, and yet they stand as firmly upon it as any crowned king.

A distinguished writer,<sup>1</sup> in two elaborate papers on "The Meaning and Government of Life," thus sums up the subject: "The ideals of modern Liberalism, 'freedom' (especially 'freedom of conscience') a political 'social contract,' as also 'equality' and 'fraternity,' all find their true realization in the recognition of 'duty' as the aim of life, and may be adopted without scruple by patriotic conservatism. In the idea of 'duty' is found their *true* realization; while the delusions which have seduced men to the worship of false idols in their place, stand revealed through such conception as if touched by the spear of Ithuriel. The idols which have been set up for the true God have been 'freedom for the passions,' the 'envious levelling of superiority,' the 'abolition of reverence,' — the abolition of reverence for man's essence (his

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<sup>1</sup> St. George Mivart.

moral responsibility), the abolition of reverence for the world, and the abolition of reverence for God. These idols overthrown, in their place stand disclosed the true objects of esteem. These are the various forms of activity in pursuit of physical, emotional, intellectual, and above all moral good, which arise from the conscientious pursuit in things great and small, alike by individuals and by states, of duty as the one aim of life. It is this conception which intensifies, beautifies, and transfigures human life; and it is this which alone gives to it dignity and significance."

Whittier poetically says, "A loving heart carries with it, under every parallel of latitude, the warmth and light of the tropics. It plants its Eden in the wilderness and solitary place, and sows with flowers the gray desolation of rock and mosses."

What, indeed, is life worth unless it has some love and friendship to feed upon?

"Kind hearts are more than coronets."

It is a melancholy thought that will sometimes confront us, — that of our personal

isolation and individuality. We boast of our "kith and kin," and our intimate friendships; yet we are compelled to a great extent to make the journey of life alone. How diverse are the routes we have to take! There are some who are girt, shod, well draped, and protected, who walk on velvet lawns and smooth terraces; but the many have to encounter fierce tempests and blinding wind-storms, or walk over rugged paths, but poorly clothed and with unsaddled feet.

We are not accustomed to think of death as being as naturally a condition of our existence as life itself, yet such it is. But, to the Christian, what we call death is the gate of life; or, as Longfellow beautifully puts it, —

"There is no death! What seems so is transition;  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,  
Whose portal we call death."

Said Bishop Hall, "Every day is a little life, and our whole life is but a day repeated; whence it is said that old Jacob numbers his life by days, and Moses desires to be taught


this point of holy arithmetic, to number not his years, but his days."

"And such is human life, at best, —  
A mother's, a lover's, the green earth's breast;  
A wreath that is formed of flowrets three —  
Primrose, and myrtle, and rosemary;  
A hopeful, a joyful, a sorrowful stave;  
A launch, a voyage, a whelming wave;  
The cradle, the bridal, and the grave!"

Life's great lesson is to teach us life's great end; and it is not to be measured merely by its duration, but by its harvest of thoughts and deeds.

"'Tis not the number of the lines on life's fast-filling page,  
'Tis not the pulse's added throbs which constitute their age.  
Seize, then, the minutes as they pass, — the woof of life is *thought!*  
Warm up the colors, let them glow, by fire or fancy fraught.  
Live to some purpose; make thy life a gift of use to thee, —  
A joy, a good, a golden hope, a heavenly argosy!"

## OUR SOCIAL SALUTATIONS.

 HE social principle of our humanity is strong and ineradicable ; and it is well that it is so, since it is charged with our highest earthly interests. The social instinct is also irresistible, while growing out of it are the various relationships and virtues that adorn and beautify domestic life. This law of sociality expresses itself in outward forms of action and modes of speech. In noticing briefly these conventional courtesies, it is proposed to group together some of the various utterances which accompany our greetings and our partings. These salutations of friendship have been styled "the rude poetry of life, refined and beautified in song."

"There's a charm that seems to follow every greeting word we say.

Our 'good-nights' and our 'good-mornings' chase unkindly thoughts away.

They give rest to weary watchers, to the weak  
impart new power ;  
While the good within the greeting scatters sun-  
shine on each hour."

Said Emerson, "The whole of heraldry and chivalry is in courtesy;" and gentleness, cheerfulness, and urbanity form its triple graces.

"Hail, ye small, sweet courtesies of life !  
for smooth do ye make the road of it ; and  
ye open the door and let the stranger in."

In a utilitarian sense it is economic and profitable, since politeness costs little and yields bountifully. Tennyson tells us the same truth. He says, "Gentle words are always gain." If all could only act out that line, the world at large would be all the better for it.

"Study with care politeness, that will teach  
The modish forms of gesture and of speech."

The courtesies which belong to civilized society are no less obligatory in domestic life ; this is an obligation, however, sometimes disregarded or intermitted. Morning greetings are benedictions.



Politeness is itself always the same ; but the rules of *etiquette*, which are merely the forms in which it finds expression, vary with time and place. A sincere regard for the rights of others, in the smallest matters as well as the largest ; genuine kindness of heart, good taste, and self-command (which are the foundations of good manners), — are never out of fashion. A person who possesses these can hardly be discourteous or rude. Some gentle natures seem to be endowed with the instinct of courtesy, and have no need to cultivate the graces and amenities of polite life ; and with them there is little fear of their transgressing conventional usages. This class is not restricted to the privileged aristocracy, but is found no less among the average ranks of society ; for wealth and culture are not always conjoined, — instances of the opposite not being unknown. Money may be supposed, like charity, “to cover a multitude of sins ;” but it will not cover nor conceal a vulgar nature.

“You may daub and bedizen the man, if you will,  
But the stamp of the vulgar remains on him still.”



Sydney Smith sagaciously remarks, that “life is too short to get over a bad manner; besides, manners are the shadows of virtue.” Nothing is more dissimilar than natural and artificial politeness: the first consists in a voluntary abnegation of self, and the other is a compulsory consideration of others. Good nature and good sense are the best guaranty for good manners. But some persons are found too talkative and intrusive, while others are just as taciturn and unsocial. The author above named has something further to say on this subject, which is worth repeating: “On one occasion a gentleman was my companion,” he says, “in a stage-coach. We had been conversing on general subjects for some time; but, when we came near to York, he suddenly looked out of the window, and exclaimed, ‘There is a very clever man, they say, but a very odd fellow, lives near here, — Sydney Smith, I believe.’ — ‘He may be a very odd fellow,’ I replied, taking off my hat to him, and laughing, ‘and I dare say he is; but, odd as he is, he is here, and very much at your service, sir.’ Poor man, I thought he would have sunk into his boots, he was so mortified at his dilemma!”

It is related of Pope Clement XIV., that, when he ascended the papal chair, the ambassadors of the several states represented at his court waited on him with their congratulations. When they were introduced and bowed their heads, the pontiff returned the courtesy. It was suggested by a cardinal to his Holiness that it was not right for him to return the salute. "Oh, I beg your pardon!" was the sarcastic response: "I have not been Pope long enough to forget good manners."

Were we to seek for the origin of salutations and greetings, we should have to go back to primitive times. The frequent allusions in the Sacred Scriptures to the customary salutations of the Jews invest the subject with a higher degree of interest than it might otherwise possess. The earliest forms of expression were such as "God be gracious unto thee." The ordinary mode of address current in the East resembles the Hebrew "Peace be on you." The Orientals, indeed, are famed for the elaborate formality of their greetings, which occupy a very considerable time; the gestures and inflections used in salutations vary with the dignity and station of the person addressed.

The ecclesiastical usage of the Romish Church is "*Pax vobiscum,*" with the response "*Et cum Spiritu!*" The Frenchman greets you literally with "How do you carry yourself?" and at parting with the phrase, "Till we meet." The Irishman hails, "The top of the morning to you;" the German, "How goes it?" the Hollander, "How do you go?" the Swede, "How do you think?"

Life itself, indeed, is largely made up of greetings and partings; and in our day of incessant locomotion and intercommunication, it is especially true. Our meetings are usually accompanied with some such verbal greetings as "How are you?" "I am glad to meet you;" and sometimes we supplement them with an allusion to the state of the weather, or something equally commonplace. Our partings are generally summed up in the familiar phrase "Good-by." With the gentler sex, however, friendly partings are more prolonged. With them it does not usually suffice to say "Good-by" or "*Au revoir;*" but they reserve to the extreme moment many little items of gossip, with

many requests of future interchanging of visits, etc. Of all national forms of salutation, doubtless, that most in vogue in all English-speaking communities is, "How do you do?" It is the best, because the most characteristic in import; being full of action, never inopportune, because always a suitable inquiry, and one of friendly solicitude as to health and happiness. The parting phrase "Good-by" (i.e. "God be with you"), like "Farewell" (from the Saxon), is equivalent to the Latin *vale* and *valet* ("May you be in health").

"One day 'Good-by' met 'How-d'ye-do,' too close  
to shun saluting;  
But soon the rival sisters flew from kissing to dis-  
puting.  
"Away," says How-d'ye-do, "your mien appalls  
my cheerful nature;  
No name so sad as yours is seen in sorrow's nomen-  
clature."  
Good-by replied, "Your statement's true, and well  
your cause you've pleaded;  
But, pray, who'd think of *How-d'ye-do*, unless Good-  
by preceded?  
From love and friendship's kindred source, we both  
derive existence;  
And they would both lose half their force without  
our joint assistance." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> W. R. Spencer.

There is yet another form or mode of friendly greeting, known, indeed, to all climes and times, and especially as an æsthetic pastime with the gentler sex. It is, however, so *spirituelle* and intangible in itself, that we shall have to refer the reader for its definition to the Scottish bard, who thus sings about its magic power, —

“ Speaking silence, dumb confession, passion’s birth,  
and infants’ play,  
Dove-like fondness, chaste concession, glowing  
dawn of brighter day,  
Sorrowing joy, adieu’s last action, when lingering  
lips no more may join, —  
What words can ever speak affection so thrilling  
and sincere as thine ? ”

Next of kin to the above is the custom of kissing the hand, which also may be said to be a sort of universal language intelligible without an interpreter, and which might have preceded writing and even speech itself. Solomon refers to this practice of his courtiers ; and in Homer we read of Priam kissing the hands, and embracing the knees, of Achilles, while he supplicates for the body of Hector. Thus whether the custom of

salutation is practised by kissing the hands of others from respect, or in bringing one's own to the mouth, it is, perhaps, of all customs, the most universal.

What do we not owe to the cunning dexter hand? Does it not wield alike the sword and the pen, the chisel and the pencil, the organ and the violin, the microscope and telescope? And is it not the almost universal factor in the every-day economy of our human life? With the hand we demand, entreat, promise, dismiss, refuse, instruct, and otherwise enact a thousand purposes of the mind. Ought we not, therefore, to prize very highly this indispensable member?

“The human hand, interpreter of will,  
Servant so great, yet so obedient still.”

Rightly has it been styled “the instrument of instruments, the chamberlain of Nature, the minister of wrath, and the accepted symbol of courtesy and friendship.”

There are many modes in which character reveals itself, — by the face and the voice, by laughter, by gait, and by the grasp of the hand. But, perhaps, the latter is not the least legible ;

for much of the disposition and character may be discovered by the manner in which the act is performed, whether in a cold, phlegmatic way, or with the glow and warmth of feeling, indicative of true friendship, whether sinister or sincere. Sometimes the act is unaccompanied by words ; and even then we are willing to accept the act for the word of fealty or friendship, like the delicate language of Flora, or the silent eloquence of the eye. Such silent appeals have an eloquence of their own, and who has not felt their potency?

In Xenophon's "Expedition of Cyrus" (where he gives an account of the treachery of Orontes, a Persian officer in Cyrus's army), Cyrus tells the Greeks that "he had pardoned Orontes for previous acts of treachery, and had given and received from him the right hand of friendship." We also find reference to the custom, in Virgil's "Æneid," the first book, where the right hand is extended in the greeting of friends. In forming and completing contracts, the parties thereto sealed the agreement by joining their hands.



In the Orient, the customary mode of salutation or greeting is by the salaam, or touching one's self with the fingers on the breast; while in the Occident, among the Western nations, and especially the Latin race, the grasping and shaking of the hand prevailed. In spite of the mutations of time, this custom of hand-shaking has come down, to us of the nineteenth century even, indeed, from patriarchal times, unimpaired either in vigor or value.

“There is nothing more characteristic,” said Sydney Smith, “than shakes of the hand. There is the high official: the body erect, and a rapid, short shake, near the chin. There is the mortmain: the flat hand introduced into your palm, and hardly conscious of its contiguity. The digital: one finger held out, — much used by the high clergy. There is the shakus rusticus, when your hand is seized by an iron grasp betokening rude health, warm heart, and distance from the metropolis, but producing a strong sense of relief on your part when you find your fingers unbroken. Then next to this is the retentive shake, — one which, beginning with vigor, pauses, as it were,



to take breath ; and without relinquishing its prey, and before you are aware, begins again, till you feel anxious as to the result, and have no shake left in you." This classification may be deemed exhaustive and complete ; but the subject is, we think, susceptible of yet further analysis. Every person, according to his nature or proclivity, shakes the hand of his friend. The nicest refinements and idiosyncrasies of character may not, perhaps, be discoverable ; but the more salient points of temperament and individuality may be discovered by the act.

"For the hand, of the heart is the index declaring,  
If well, or if ill, how its master will stand :  
I heed not the tongue, of its friendship the swearing,  
But judge of a friend by the shake of his hand."

Yet it must be admitted there are some hand-shakes of an eccentric order, whose manual grip you hardly know how to interpret. Some, for example, will seize your hand as they would a pump-handle, and jerk your hand to the risk of dislocation. Others, again, have a habit of keeping hold of your hand,

and swing it backward and forward like a pendulum. A story is told of two persons having met after long absence; one having been addicted to practise the pump-handle shake, and the other the pendulum. They joined hands, and attempted to put them in motion: they were neither of them feeble men, and one endeavored to pump and the other to paddle. Their faces became excited, and they were at length reduced to a stand-still condition, and had to relinquish their hold of each other; and thus terminated their cross purposes, as to their greeting. There are also the æsthetic shakers, whose respect for the restraints of etiquette and the decrees of fashion so effectually stifle all generous emotion, that you would willingly dispense with their affectation and artificial courtesy. Some of the butterfly beauties of the *beau monde* will also offer counterfeit courtesy by extending one or two of their delicate digits, as if fearful of too near an approach.

“ With finger-tip she condescends  
To touch the fingers of her friends, —  
As if she feared your palm might brand  
Some taint or stigma on her hand.”

To shake hands without removing the glove, is regarded as an act of discourtesy. This idea may have descended from the days of chivalry and tournament, when the gauntlet took the place of the glove. "I maintain that the shaking of hands, rightly administered," said a distinguished clergyman of New York, "is a means of grace. So shake hands at the market, in the street, and, above all, at church. Some people quit church for want of this means of grace."

"There is an art in shaking hands  
Not everybody understands ;  
And, as they go through life untaught,  
The simple act expresses naught.

The fingers limp within our own  
Awaken no responsive tone  
From the electric wires that send  
The hearty greeting to a friend.

But, oh, there is a simple touch,  
Gentle and soft, that means so much !  
The pulses of our soul are stirred  
As if we heard the spoken word.

The outstretched hand, the hearty grasp,  
The fingers locked in loving clasp,  
Fresh strength and courage have bestowed  
To many a one along life's road.

Some lonely traveller it may be,  
Yearning for love and sympathy,  
And quick the sign to comprehend, —  
“My heart is true ; and I’m your friend !”

Thus one repels, another draws ;  
And many are misjudged because  
Not one in twenty understands  
The gracious art of shaking hands.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Josephine Pollard.

## THE SYMBOLISM OF FLOWERS.

“Their language? Prithee! why, they are themselves  
But bright thoughts syllabled to shape and hue;  
The tongue that erst was spoken by the elves,  
When tenderness as yet within the world was new.”



FLOWERS not only have their phenomena, but their legends, based upon the idea of a sympathetic character, as that which transforms Daphne into a laurel, and changes the pale hue of a flower to crimson or purple at the occurrence of some shame or misfortune; thus, for instance, the aloe that blossoms once in a century, and the night-blooming cereus which keeps vigil when all other flowers sleep, as well as the passion-flower which is said to symbolize our Saviour's agony in the Garden. Coleridge, with his metaphysical proclivity to seize on rare and impressive analogies, has drawn a fine comparison from the water-lily. Speak-

ing of the zest for new truth felt by those already well instructed, as compared with the indifferent mental appetite of the ignorant, he says, "The water-lily in the midst of water opens its leaves and expands its petals at the first pattering shower, and rejoices in the rain-drops with a quicker sympathy than the parched shrub in the sandy desert." It may be said that there is not a flower in the cornucopia of the floral goddess, but possesses its similitude, as well as its votary. Flowers represent the poetical side of human existence ; they are exponents of its love and trust, and, like the queenliest of the graces, are a double benediction, "blessing him that gives, and her that takes."

The use of floral emblems as decorations is traceable to the remotest ages ; alike as to religious festivals, national triumphs, and the events of individual life,— the birth, the bridal, and the burial. The patriot was crowned with oak, and the poet with bay. Peace was symbolized with her olive-branch, and Bacchus wore his wreath of ivy. The Bible is not without its instructive floral allegories, — its "rose of Sharon," and its "lily of the valley."

Most of the minstrels have extolled the beauty of flowers in song. The ancient Greeks were lavish in their use of these fairy symbols : by them they expressed their grief, joy, sympathy, and religious emotions. The Olympic victor was crowned with laurel.

“ And many a maiden, with her various flowers,  
Bedecked her windows, and adorned her bowers.”

The English, Spanish, Germans, and French are fond of flowers. Among England’s old customs (according to Herrick), the Christmas evergreens were allowed to remain until Candlemas, when the mistletoe and holly were replaced with sprigs of box.

“ Down with the rosemary and bayes, down with the  
mistleto ;  
Instead of holly, now upraise the greener box  
(for show).

. . . . .

When yew is out, then birch comes in, and many  
flowers beside,  
Both of a fresh and fragrant kinne, to honor  
Whitsuntide.”

Emerson, in his beautiful essay on “ Gifts,” remarks that “ flowers and fruits are always fit



presents ; flowers, because they are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world. These gay natures contrast with the somewhat stern countenance of ordinary nature ; they are like music heard out of a workhouse." And it is the sympathy which all natural objects have for the best sentiments of our nature, that makes them always acceptable.

How lavishly has the Creator enriched the earth with floral grace and beauty, and laden the atmosphere with their fragrant perfume ! With what endless variety of form and rich coloring is the kingdom of Flora bedecked and arrayed, and what exquisite delicacy and grace characterize the broom, the furze, and the manifold varieties of the fern and algæ ! Gazing on a richly illuminated flower-garden, well might Hood exclaim, —

“ Like the birthday of the world,  
When earth was born in bloom,  
The light was made of many dyes,  
The air was all perfume ;  
There were crimson buds, and white and blue ;  
The very rainbow showers  
Had turned to blossoms as they fell,  
And sown the earth with flowers.”

Tuckerman, in an admirable paper on this subject, says, "Of the infinite variety of form, the exquisite combination of tints, the diversity of habits, and odorous luxuries they boast, it would require an elaborate treatise to unfold. Scarcely a tasteful fabric meets the eye, from the rich brocade of a past age, to the gay tints of to-day, that owes not its pleasing design to some flower. Not an ancient urn or modern cup of porcelain or silver, but illustrates in its shape, and the embossed or painted sides, how truly beautiful is art when it follows strictly these eternal models of grace and adaptation. Even architecture, as Ruskin justly indicates, is chiefly indebted to the same source, not only in the minute decorations of a frieze, but in the acanthus that terminates a column. . . . The spirit of beauty, in no other inanimate embodiment, comes so near the heart. Flowers, indeed, are related to all the offices and circumstances of human life."

"In Eastern lands, they talk in flowers,  
And they tell in a garland their loves and cares;  
Each blossom that blooms in their garden bowers,  
On its leaves a mystic language bears."

Religion and poetry have ever found expression in the symbolic vocabulary of Flora, and it has been the accepted and eloquent exponent of human emotions. The symbolism of flowers dates back, as already stated, to periods most remote. With the religious rites of the ancient Egyptians and Hindoos, the lotus was regarded as the sacred leaf,—the “emblem and cradle of creative night.” It was revered in Egypt, as it is to this day in Hindostan, China, Japan, and elsewhere; for they believe it “was in the consecrated bosom of this plant that Brahma was born, and on it Osiris delights to float.” It was called the “Lily of the Nile,” from its growing on the margin of that river. The Egyptians also delighted in the heliotrope. The nations of antiquity had also their national floral emblems as well as the moderns. The Hindoos have their marigold; the Chinese, the gorgeous chrysanthemum; and the Assyrians, the water-lily. Persian poetry is full of the glories of Flora, while Grecian mythology is a storehouse of floral legends and fancies. The Romans had their tutelary deities decked with symbolic flowers: to Juno

was devoted the lily ; to Venus, the myrtle and the rose ; to Minerva, the olive and the violet ; to Ceres, the poppy ; to Mars, the ash ; and to Jupiter, the oak. In modern times nations have their symbolic flowers. The thistle is the emblem of Scotland, and the shamrock of Ireland. The fleur-de-lis was the badge of the royal house of France, the amaranth of that of Sweden. The rose blooms forever on the royal coat-of-arms of England.

The Church has not only its symbolic flowers for its calendar, but for its altar service, —

“ Not gold nor gems, our altar dowers,  
But votive blooms and symbol flowers.”

In almost every other instance in nature, the beautiful is only incidental to the useful ; but flowers have the objectless, spontaneous luxury of existence that belongs to childhood. They typify most eloquently the benign intent of the Creator, and, by gratifying through the senses the instinct of beauty, vindicate the poetry of life with a divine sanction. Floral decoration has entered into all departments of industrial and ornamental skill. Of

all material things, flowers excite the most chivalric sentiment, and hence are given and received, scattered and woven, cultivated and gathered, worn and won, with a more generous and refined spirit than any other symbol or ornament.

They have been poetically called "the bright mosaics, that, with storied beauty, the floor of Nature's temple tessellate."

Wordsworth exclaims, —

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Why is it that the eye kindles with delight at the sight of beautiful flowers? These fairy beauties of the woods and gardens are universally cherished, in all lands, alike by the affluent and the poor, the cultured and the rude. Everywhere and under all circumstances flowers are eagerly sought after and affectionately cherished. Wherever we look, we find floral suggestions in some form or other; either artificial imitations for decking the hair or the head-dress of beauty, or enamelled on our china, embroidered in our tapestry, or woven into our carpets.

“In every flower that blooms around,  
Some pleasing emblem we may trace, —  
Young love is in the myrtle found,  
And memory in the pansy’s grace,  
Peace in the olive-branch we see,  
Hope in the half-shut iris glows,  
In the bright laurel victory,  
And lovely woman in the rose.”

In the United States, flowers are now more generally cultivated than in almost any other country. Like many other things, flower-culture has had its share in the progressive improvements of the age. The earliest known flower-garden in Europe seems to have been that at Padua, which dates from the year 1545. Horticulture is now a lucrative branch of trade in most civilized countries of the world.

Longfellow’s fine lines are a beautiful tribute to these “stars of earth,” —

“Everywhere about us they are glowing, —  
Some like stars to tell us Spring is born;  
Others, their blue eyes with tears o’erflowing,  
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn.  
In wild and cultured places, in all seasons,  
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings;

Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,  
 How akin they are to human things.  
 And with child-like, credulous affection,  
 We behold their tender buds expand, —  
 Emblems of our own great resurrection,  
 Emblems of the bright and better land."

The beautiful flowers are the accepted offerings also at the festive banquet and the chamber of sorrow. Luther is said to have kept a flower in a glass on his writing-table; and from Chaucer, the pioneer poet, to the laureate Tennyson, the bards have tuned their lyres to these "children of the sun."

Beecher was, it is well known, a great lover of flowers; and these words are among his tributes to them: "What a pity flowers can utter no sound! A singing rose, a whispering violet, a murmuring honeysuckle — oh, what a rare and exquisite melody would these be! As for marigolds, poppies, hollyhocks, and valorous sunflowers, we shall never have a garden without them, both for their own sake, and for the sake of old-fashioned folks who used to love them."

“Our outward life requires them not; then wherefore had they birth?

To minister delight to man, and beautify the earth;  
To comfort man, to whisper hope, whene'er his  
faith is dim,

That He who careth for the flowers will care much  
more for him.”

As Ruskin beautifully puts it: “Flowers seem intended for the solace of ordinary humanity. Children love them. They are the cottager’s treasure; and in the crowded town, mark, as with a little broken fragment of rainbow, the windows of the workers in whose heart rests the covenant of peace. Passionate or religious minds contemplate them with fond, feverish intensity. The affection is seen severely calm in the works of many old religious painters, and mixed with more open and true country sentiment, in those of our own pre-Raphaelites. To the child and the girl, the peasant and the manufacturing operative, to the nun, the monk, and the lover, they are precious always.”

The reader will remember the fine passage in the “Winter’s Tale,” where Perdita is



represented as giving flowers to her visitors, appropriate to, and symbolical of, their various ages : —

“ Now, my fairest friend,  
 I would I had some flowers o’ the spring, that might  
 Become your time of day ; and yours, and yours ;

. . . . .

Daffodils,

That come before the swallow dares, and take  
 The winds of March with beauty ; violets, dim,  
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno’s eyes,  
 Or Cytherea’s breath ; pale primroses,  
 That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
 Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady  
 Most incident to maids : both oxlips, and  
 The crown imperial ; lilies of all kinds,  
 The flower-de-luce being one.”

## HEAD, HEART, AND HAND.

**I**T is said to be essential to a man's happiness, that he maintain pacific relations both with his conscience and his stomach; each having alike the power either to conserve or to destroy his enjoyment of life.

The first named, given for the regulation of his actions and desires, imposes laws and limitations for the health of his mental and moral nature; while the claims of the stomach, although of a very different order, are no less imperative than those of the conscience. Although in either case hygienic law cannot be disregarded with impunity, yet, as a general rule, we are more apt to be attentive to the appeals of the lower nature than the higher. Conscience is, indeed, wonderfully patient and even indulgent with us, in our disobedience and disregard of its

authority, — an illustration of which is seen in the following. A clergyman, visiting one of the prisons of the British metropolis, noticed a prisoner whose physiognomy he thought too good to be found in such a condition. “What are you here for?” was the question of the visitor. “For burglary,” was the reply. “But have you no conscience?” was the rejoinder. “Oh, yes!” he said; “and I suppose it is about as good as new, for I never used it!”

When the digestive system receives proper attention, it ministers generally through the blood to the demands of the whole physical system. Yet, while all this lubrication and nourishment of the body are going on, we are usually unconscious of its silent operations. While the organs of sense perform their functions, we seem to forget our obligations to these “five gateways of knowledge,” if we do not, indeed, ignore their existence. So it is, also, with our pedal extremities, on which we depend for locomotion. When these essential organs are, however, disabled, or we are deprived of them, we at once begin to estimate their great value to our happiness.

The mysterious union of soul and body — like that of life itself — is a problem that baffles all our efforts at solution. That the physical and metaphysical elements of our nature do act and re-act upon each other, is self-evident; but how the processes are affected, we are unable to determine. This union of the two attributes of our being — so dissimilar, yet so intimately connected, and so perfectly adapted to their respective offices — is the marvel of creation; one being the complement of the other: for without the mind, the body could have no knowledge of any thing in the external world; nor could the mind accomplish its behest without the physical organism, since the mind receives and imparts knowledge of the affairs of life through the organic senses.

The human head, endowed as it is with the organs of sight, hearing, taste, and smell, and being the seat of intellect and language, is the crowning glory of our nature; and we instinctively recognize the distinction by invariably making our appeals to headquarters. We await the responses from lip or eye; the latter, sometimes, with greater power than

with the verbal rhetoric of the former. Is not the head, also, the electric telegraph station, whence messages are transmitted by the nerve-wires to the several departments of the human body, instructing hand or foot, heart or tongue, to do its bidding?

It is a remarkable fact concerning the brain, that, although it is the seat of all sensation, it is yet itself insensible. To cut the brain, we are told by physiologists, gives no pain; yet in the brain resides the power of feeling pain in any part of the body. Without our nervous system, which derives its supplies of nerve-fluid from the brain, we should be alike insensible to all sensations of pleasure or pain.

The heart, which is by common consent poetically considered to be the seat of the affections and emotions, is but the reservoir of the blood.

Quaint Francis Quarles thus apostrophizes a good heart: "O happy heart, where piety affecteth, humility subjecteth, repentance correcteth; where obedience dissecteth, perseverance perfecteth, and charity connecteth!"

Like the head and the hand, the heart is liable to get out of order sometimes: the latter, indeed, is proverbially subject to dis-temper and disease. Heart-disease is usually attributed to the feverish excitements of modern commercial life; but there is another type of heart-disease that has been of long standing, and which is not only traceable to quite a different source, but which is likely to prevail as long as human hearts are the seats of passions.

In the "Breviarie of Health" (1547), we find the following statement: "There is an infirmitie named *Hercos* in the Greek, *Amor* in Latin, and in English is called love-sick; and women may have this fickleness, as well as men. Young persons are much troubled with this impediment. This infirmitie is best cured by the use of mirthe and merrie companie."

A good face is said to be a letter of recommendation, but a good heart is equal to a letter of credit.

Now, for the hand. Let us take hold of it and look at it closely, and it indicates much to us; so much, indeed, that it would be difficult

to go through life's duties and obligations without it.

Wrote Quintilian, long ago, "Other parts of the human body assist the speaker, but the hands speak for themselves: by them we ask, we promise, we invoke, we dismiss, we threaten, we deprecate; we express fear, joy, grief, our doubts, our assent, our penitence; we show moderation, profusion; we mark number and time."

Were it not for the facile fingers that guide the pen and serve us in a thousand other useful ways, the social system of life would end, and chaos would come again.

"The instrument of instruments, the hand!  
 Courtesy's index, chamberlain to Nature,  
 The body's soldier, the mouth's caterer,  
 Psyche's great secretary, the dumb's eloquence,  
 The blind man's candle and his forehead's buckler,  
 The minister of wrath, and friendship's sign!"

Professor Wilson, referring to the superiority of the hand, writes thus: "The organs of all other senses, even in their greatest perfection, are dependent upon the hand for the exaltation of their powers. It constructs for

the eye a copy of itself, and thus gives it a telescope with which to range among the stars; and by another copy, on a slightly different plan, furnishes it with a microscope, and introduces it into a new world of wonders. It constructs for the ear the instruments by which it is educated, and sounds them in its hearing till its powers are trained to the full. It plucks for the nostril the flower which it longs to smell, and distils for it the fragrance which it covets. As for the tongue, if it had not the hand to serve it, it might abdicate its throne as the lord of taste. In short, the organ of touch is the minister of its sister senses, and, without any play of words, is the hand-maid of them all."

In "Dombey and Son" we notice the following fine sentence: "Long may it remain in this mixed world a point not easy of decision, which is the most beautiful evidence of the Almighty's goodness,—the delicate fingers that are formed for sensitiveness and sympathy of touch, and made to minister to pain and grief; or the rough, hard Captain Cuttle hand, that the heart teaches, guides, and softens in a moment."



As already hinted, efforts of the will are instantly and instinctively responded to, as if the hand itself were the seat of that will ; yet the very perfection of the instrument makes us insensible to its use. Indeed, we use our hand as unconsciously as we draw our breath.

It has been said that the will is the man ; but the statement must be accepted with qualifications, since much is done by the physical man that is purely automatic and independent of the will. Our breathing and our digestive processes, for instance : we yawn, cough, sneeze, laugh, and weep involuntarily. Contact of the air with the eye, and the loss of moisture, cause the involuntary wink ; and if, in passing the hand before the eye of a friend, he is assured that you will not hurt that organ, yet the eye instinctively will wink.

Is there any real distinction to be found between voluntary and involuntary actions ? Or, rather, is not man as to his physical nature partly automatic, and as to his psychological the incarnation of will-power ? Man is the only terrestrial being conscious of his nature, since he can analyze his faculties, his will, intellect, and physiology.

What, indeed, has not the human mind accomplished in its discoveries in the realm of nature? Max Müller sums up its explorations: "Man has studied every part of nature, — the mineral treasures of the earth, the flowers of each season, the animals of every continent, the laws of storms, and the movements of the heavenly bodies; he has analyzed every substance, dissected every organism; he knows every bone and muscle, every nerve and fibre of his own body, to the ultimate elements which compose his flesh and blood; he has meditated on the nature of his soul, on the laws of his mind, and tried to penetrate into the last causes of all being." Added to this is the somewhat recent science of philology, now one of the favorite studies of archæologists. Language, indeed, is itself the mysterious *characteristic* of man, and forms an impassable barrier between him and the lower order of animals. How thankful should we be for the gift of life, and the wonderful mechanism of the "house we live in"! Charles Mackay has written for us the hymn of thanksgiving, —

“For sight, for taste, for touch, for smell,  
For sense of life ineffable ;  
For health of mind and strength of hand,  
For power to think and understand ;  
For every joy we feel or see,  
For hope and love and sympathy, —  
Lord, we are thankful unto thee.”

Indispensable to us as are the head, heart, and hand, we should not ignore the fact that we are no less indebted to the inexorable stomach for its untiring good service to the bodily functions, while we also depend solely upon our pedalian extremities for locomotion.

By way of *foot-note*, thereby, the following few sentences may not be inappropriate, since they may serve to place our subject upon a proper footing with the reader. But for the feet, we should cease to be pedestrians, and our peregrinations would be at end ; without these important travelling companions, we should become immovable fixtures in society, — as immovable as the trees of the forest. It has been said that “the human foot is the wonder of wonders.” We are not accustomed to think much about its complex mechanism of muscle, ligament, band, and

bone, which act in combination as we walk. Some have, indeed, held that the foot, more than any other member of the human body, is distinctively characteristic of man, as separate from all other created beings. Individual character may be said to be indicated by the form of the foot, as well as by the gait or style of the walk. Unlike the animal creation, the "paragon of animals" stands erect, as befits its acknowledged lord. Although so remote from the head, yet whatever affects the foot is instantaneously known at "head-quarters" by the nerve system, as by the electric current. It is still presumed to be an open question as to the duality of the human mind, — whether it is capable of performing two functions simultaneously. Yet how frequently do people walk and talk at the same time! Mental action seems to be more than probable: it is implied, or the walking or the talking would, doubtless, go astray. "Man balances himself with his arms in walking and running. It is not accident that raises the horse's bushy tail high into the air, when it races about in frisky, youthful exuberance; nor does chance teach it to bend head and

neck low when it drags, slowly and painfully, heavy loads up steep mountain-sides. The squirrel is balanced and aided by his long, feathery tail ; and when the cat springs with fierce precision upon its unsuspecting prey, it also is guided through the air by its stiffly extended tail. The untaught boy already moves his outstretched arms instinctively up and down, as he first attempts to walk a narrow plank, or to cross a brook on a single log. The rope-dancer but adds to the length of his arms by his pole, and thus walks the more safely on his perilous path.

“The whole process of walking, however, is a constant balancing of the human body. Standing still, it rests upon the two column-shaped legs, so that the centre of gravity falls between the two heels. As soon as we begin to walk, we transfer the body from one foot to the other, during which transfer the legs at the same time change place with each other, and move forward. One leg supports the body, the other glides to its next resting-place. Slightly bent, so as not to touch the ground, it swings like a pendulum, held up by neither bone nor sinew, but merely by the

pressure of the air ; while the supporting leg bends likewise, and the body thus literally falls forward. But before it actually falls, the swinging leg has accomplished its movement, and, resting upon the ground, it supports in its turn the body. In running quickly, there is, therefore, a moment when the body really hangs in the air without any support whatever.”<sup>1</sup>

An eminent authority<sup>2</sup> remarks, “There is nothing more beautiful than the structure of the human foot, nor, perhaps, any demonstration which would lead a well-educated person to desire more of anatomy than that of the foot. The foot has in its structure all the fine appliances that you see in a building. In the first place, there is an arch, in whatever way you regard the foot ; looking down upon it, we perceive several bones coming round from the astragalus, and forming an entire circle of surfaces in the contact. If we look at the profile of the foot, an arch is still manifest, of which the posterior part is formed by the heel, and the anterior by the ball of the great toe ; and in the front, we

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<sup>1</sup> Harper's Magazine.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Bell.

find, in that direction, a transverse arch : so that instead of standing, as might be imagined, upon a solid bone, we stand upon an arch, composed of a series of bones which are united by the most curious provisions for the elasticity of the foot. Hence, when jumping from a height directly upon the heel, a severe shock is felt : not so if we alight on the ball of the toe ; for then an elasticity is in the whole foot, and the weight of the body is thrown upon this arch, and the shock avoided." This natural arch of the foot is regarded as distinctive of superior grace of form and refinement of nature, but modern fashion insists upon going even beyond the limits of natural grace and symmetry. Such a silly attempt to *improve* upon nature's true standard not only fails of its intended effect, but it also usually entails upon its fair votary the penalty of the folly, in the inability to walk with ease and grace, and maintain a well-poised gait.



## SMILES AND TEARS.

“Smiles from reason flow,  
To brute denied, and are of love the food.”

MILTON.



THE rare faculty of looking at the bright side of things produces, to some extent, those effects which the alchemist ascribed to the fabled philosopher's stone; for it often transmutes seeming evil into real good. That life has its shadows as well as its sunshine; that its joys are tempered, and often brightened, by the contrast of its sorrow, — is not only the result of a necessary law, but one eminently conducive to our social well-being. Longfellow observes, “The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken.” The great panacea for the seeming accidents, ills, and vicissitudes of life, is a spirit of cheerful acquiescence. If we would, as the optimist, view life philosophically, and accept it as a



boon and benison from Heaven, we ought to regard its ever-varying phases, and especially its bitter, as well as bright experiences, as alike beneficent in their design for the maturing and developing of our moral nature.

Leigh Hunt remarks: "God made both tears and laughter, and both for kind purposes; for as laughter enables mirth and surprise to breathe freely, so tears enable sorrow to vent itself patiently. Tears hinder sorrow from becoming despair and madness; and laughter is one of the privileges of reason, being confined to the human species." Both laughter and tears have their characteristic differences, and they are determined by the occasion that calls them into action. "Whatever causes laughter, determines whether laughter is good or bad. If it is the expression of levity or vanity, it is frivolous. If it be the expression of moral feeling, — and it often is, — it is as reverent as tears are. In a natural state, tears and laughter go hand in hand; for they are twin-born. Like two children sleeping in one cradle, when one wakes and stirs the other

wakes also.”<sup>1</sup> Laughter is not always, however, a certain index of the feelings; for many kind, as well as enraged hearts are driven to the resource of laughing to conceal their tears. Neither does weeping always indicate sadness of heart. Some weep for very joy. There is a sacredness in the tears of sorrow, and they speak more eloquently than articulate speech.

“There are times when some great sorrow has torn the mind away from its familiar supports, and laid level those defences which in prosperity seemed so stable; when the most rooted convictions of the reason seem rottenness, and the blossom of our heavenward imagination goes up before the blast as dust; when our works and joys and hopes, with all their multitude and pomp and glory, seem to go down together into the pit, and the soul is left as a garden that hath no water, and as a wandering bird cast out of the nest,—in that day of trouble, and of treading down and perplexity, the noise of voices, the mirth of the tabret, and the joy of the harp are silent as the grave.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Beecher.

<sup>2</sup> British Quarterly Review.

There is a luxury of feeling in tears of deep sorrow, because the heart's anguish is thereby lessened, and its griefs distilled as the summer shower when succeeded by the sunshine. *Tears* have been imaged by the night, as *laughter* has been by the day; but there is an intermediate hour of grace and beauty we call twilight, and this may represent the still more fascinating *smile*. A smile does wonders in lighting up the dark corners of a man's heart. It has power to electrify his whole being. Its fascination is most potent.

“As welcome as sunshine in every place,  
Is the beaming approach of a good-natured face.”

Good-humor is a bright color in the web of life, but self-denial only can make it a fast color. A person who is the slave of selfishness has so many wants of his own to be supplied, so many interests of his own to support and defend, that he has no leisure to study the wants and interests of others. It is impossible that he should be happy himself, or make others around him so.

Good-humor is the clear blue sky of the

soul, on which every star of talent will shine more clearly, and the sun of genius encounter no vapors in its passage. It is the most exquisite beauty of a fine face, a redeeming grace in a homely one. It is like the green in a landscape, harmonizing in every color, mellowing the light, and softening the hue of the dark; or like a flute in a full concert of instruments, a sound not at first discovered by the ear, yet filling up the breaks in the concord with its deep melody.

It is not great calamities that embitter existence: it is the petty vexations, the small jealousies, little disappointments, and minor miseries, that make the heart heavy and the temper sour.

“Oh, smiles have power, a world of good  
To fling around us ever!  
Then let us wear their golden beams,  
And quench their ardor never.  
For while a smile illumines the eye,  
And wreathes the lip of beauty,  
The task of life must ever be  
A pure and pleasant duty.”

Mirth is sometimes an excellent medicine and tonic; it is one of nature's instinctive

methods of recuperating the over-taxed mind and body. What a febrifuge ! what an exorciser of evil spirits !

Mirthfulness has a great power over the excited feelings and the angry irritations of men : it makes them more generous and more just. It is often more powerful with men than conscience or reason ; and Shakspeare asserts that it “bars a thousand harms, and lengthens life.” It has been well said, however, that “mirth should be the embroidery of conversation, not the web ; the ornament of the mind, not the furniture.”

“Laughter is not, therefore, a foolish thing. Sometimes there is even wisdom in it. Solomon himself admits there is a time to laugh, as well as a time to mourn.”

Carlyle says, “Very much lies in laughter ; it is the cipher key wherewith we decipher the whole man.”

Lavater says, “Shun that man who never laughs, who dislikes music or the glad face of a child.” This is what everybody feels, and none more than children, who are quick at reading characters ; and their strong instinct rarely deceives them.

Is there any thing like the ringing laugh of an innocent, happy child? Can any other music so echo through the heart's inner chambers? It is sympathetic, too, beyond other melodies.

Sardonic laughter derives its origin from a herb said to be found in Sardinia, which resembles parsley, and which, according to an ancient authority, "causes those who tea it to die of laughter." Homer first, and others after him, call laughter which conceals some noxious design *Sardonian*.

"Laughter! 'tis the poor man's plaster,  
Covering up each sad disaster.  
Laughing, he forgets his troubles,  
Which, though real, seem but bubbles."

Laughter has been said to be more contagious than any cutaneous complaint: the convulsion is propagated like sound. When Liston the comedian presented himself at the theatre, on one occasion, and made his comic grimaces merely, the entire audience became convulsed with laughter.

Thomas Moore records in his diary a visit with Sydney Smith to Deville's the phrenol-

ogist, and speaks there of the jovial canon's inextinguishable and contagious laughter, which he joined in even to tears. But here is a pretty pendant to Johnson holding by the post: "Left Lord John's with Sydney and Luttrell; and when we got to Cockspur Street (having laughed all the way), we were all three seized with such convulsions of cachinnation at something (I forget what) which Sydney said, that we were obliged to separate, and reel each his own way with the fit."

The same canon is said to have let off this retort: when it was being proposed to place wooden pavement around St. Paul's Cathedral, he replied, "If the dean and chapter would only lay their heads together, the thing would be done!"

"Kind words have been styled the bright flowers of existence. They make a paradise of home, however humble it may be. They are the jewellery of the heart, the gems of the domestic circle, the symbols of human love.

"They never blister the tongue or lips, and we have never heard of any mental trouble arising from this quarter. Though

they do not cost much, yet they accomplish much: they help one's own good-nature and good-will. Soft words soften our own soul. Angry words are fuel to the flame of wrath, and make it blaze more fiercely."

Kind words are benedictions. They are not only instruments of power, but of benevolence and courtesy; blessings both to the speaker and hearer of them.

Pleasant words come bubbling up in a good-natured heart, like the freely gushing waters of a fountain. It is as easy to speak them as it is to breathe. They come forth spontaneously from the lips of kindness, as the rays from the sun.

"Pour forth the oil, pour boldly forth;  
It will not fail, until  
Thou failest vessels to provide  
Which it may largely fill.  
Make channels for the streams of love,  
Where they may broadly run;  
And love has ever flowing streams  
To fill them every one.  
For we must share, if we would keep  
That blessing from above.  
Ceasing to give, we cease to have:  
Such is the law of love."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Trench.



How do such gentle charities convert even the infirmities of advanced life, which it cannot dissipate, into occasions of pleasanter anticipation, as the sun at evening lines the thickest clouds with pearl and silver, and edges their masses with golden sheen !

The bright side of life is that which catches the reflected light of heaven, and echoes back its harmonies ; thus supplying a sweet antidote to the troubles and disturbing influences of earth.

How great is the empire of joy which God has designed for us in his infinite goodness ! We spring into existence, and the varied seasons lavish upon our senses their variegated flowers and fruits. Hope gilds the future with its iris hues, friendship redoubles our pleasures and alleviates our pains, and the glittering orbs of heaven are the bright heralds of a nobler life hereafter.

Joy is the friend of innocence ; but there are many specious counterfeits of pleasure, with which the weak and unwary are beguiled. Who would drink poison to produce agreeable sensations ?

Groans and complaints, it has been truly said, are the worst possible staple of social intercourse. "A laugh," says Charles Lamb, "is worth a hundred groans in any state of the market."

William Dunbar, whom Sir Walter Scott so much admired, has the following stanza, which, as the poet died at so early a period of the language as the year 1520, is almost a marvel of sweetness and harmony:—

"Be merry, man, and tak not sair in mind  
The wavering of this wretched world of sorrow.  
To God be humble, to thy friend be kind,  
And with thy neighbor gladly lend and borrow:  
His chance to-night, it may be thine to-morrow."

A complaining spirit magnifies troubles in proportion as it dilates upon them. The better plan is gratefully to recount the pleasures by the way, which are too seldom the incentives of thankfulness.

Let us, then, carry along with us in our hearts some bright streaks of sunshine for a rainy day. Dark days are not less needful or healthful for us than bright ones.

Uninterrupted sunshine would parch our hearts: we want shade and rain, to cool, refresh, and fertilize them.

“ Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.”

## DAY AND NIGHT.

“When darkness ruled with universal sway,  
God spake, and kindled up the blaze of day!”



ALTHOUGH in juxtaposition, and directly opposite in character and appearance, yet Day and Night are not in antagonism : on the contrary, they may be said to be on the most friendly terms, and fulfil their respective missions with harmonious fidelity and precision. More than this may be affirmed of them,—they are really indispensably necessary to each other's existence ; and it has been said, so mutually sympathetic are they, that no sooner does one begin to “decline ” than the other “breaks.” It may safely be added, that since their birth they have never been known to disagree and interrupt one another in their appointed routine. It is true, however, that they differ essentially in character and aspect,

—one being of a cheerful, sunny disposition, and much addicted to activity and excitement ; the other of a sombre and gloomy temper, and given rather to retirement and repose. Thus they harmoniously act, — the one affording us a pleasant sphere of exertion, and enjoyment of life's prismatic scenes ; the other bringing to us a delightful respite from toil, and by its recuperative influence thus fitting us for renewed enjoyment. Were it not so familiar to us, the advent of day and its gradually giving way to night would provoke our astonishment as something mysterious, if not, indeed, miraculous ; but it is to us simply an every-day occurrence.

Old Father Time, who is portrayed to us with a stern visage, and a long, flowing gray beard, accompanied at all times with his inevitable scythe, takes no heed to the shadow on the dial or to the sounding of the bell, never stops, but like a resistless phantom speeds ever on his way, needing not to pause for rest or recuperation. If we seek to detain him for a friendly greeting on the advent of the New Year or some other festive occasion, instead of his staying his winged

feet he only seems to glide from us with the greater celerity.

The accession of a new year is to him but the succession of the old: all seasons and changes are alike to him; and yet this mythical, invisible, yet ever-present visitant keeps ever our inseparable companion. We sometimes seem to catch a glimpse of his mystic presence: to some he appears in the iris hues of hope, the harbinger of sunshine and joy; to others an unwelcome guest, like an ominous cloud charged with dark forebodings of grief and sadness. Darkness and light divide the course of time, in the moral as well as in the physical world; while oblivion shares with memory a great part of our existence. "We slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us." <sup>1</sup>

The division of time into seven days is by far the most permanent division, and "the most ancient monument of astronomical knowledge. It was used by the Brahmins of India, with the same denomination used by us, and was alike found in the calendars

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<sup>1</sup> Sir T. Browne.

of the Jews, Egyptians, Arabs, and Assyrians. It has survived the fall of empires, and has existed among all successive generations, — a proof of the common origin of mankind. The division of the year into months is also very old, and almost universal, but not so ancient or uniform as the seven days, or week.”<sup>1</sup>

The day commenced with sunrise among most of the Northern nations ; at sunset, with the Athenians and Jews ; and among the Romans, at midnight, as with us. The Chinese divide the day into twelve parts, of two hours each. The astronomical day begins at noon, is divided into twenty-four hours, and is the mode of reckoning used in the nautical almanac. The week is the quarter of a month, or seven days ; and the twelve months, in their order, make up the year, — the space of time required for a revolution of the earth around the sun.

Day and night have their claims to beauty as well as utility ; the day for its golden sunshine, night for its matchless canopy of silver stars. As to the term “day,” its

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Somerville.

root is probably of Anglo-Saxon origin, — *daeg*, signifying the period of light; while “night” seems to have been derived from *nak*, literally meaning to disappear or discontinue.

Sunrise at sea, or as viewed from Alpine heights, is a glorious vision; and it has often been the theme of the artist’s pencil and the minstrel’s lyre. Here is a fine apostrophe to it: —

“Now to the music of the purple dawn  
The bright, entrancèd stars pass slowly by,  
Lingering to see the glorious sunlight born,  
Ere they sink fondly in the yearning sky.  
Now the earth chirrups, like a wakened bird  
Which gives its heart unto the jubilant air.  
Only one voice throughout the world is heard,  
And that proclaims that life is bright and fair.”

How full of significance is the radiant dawn of day, — symbolical of the bright budding of infancy, its virgin freshness, purity, and beauty. As the brilliant hues of the morning become gradually absorbed by the intenser radiance of the solar beams, so the noontide of our human life is imaged.

Daylight has been poetically called the



“light of heaven,” since it not only enables us to see all things that come within the range of our vision, giving to the many-hued and fragrant flowers, as well as all other objects of grace and beauty, their exquisite variety and glory.

“How glorious is the morn! how sweet the air,  
 Perfumed with fragrant odors that the sun  
 Exhaleth from the flowers of the earth!  
 Hark! how the birds, those warbling choristers,  
 Do strain their pretty throats, and sweetly sing  
 Glad hymns to Him who made this glorious light!”

There is also the quiet, restful eventide, an hour when the sun retires and the shadows fall. It is a time which in all ages the good and thoughtful have loved for its quietude and its peaceful associations. During the day we hold intercourse with men; and in this silent hour of eventide, we have leisure to commune with ourselves, our books, or Nature herself.

“The clouds of sunset, fold on fold,  
 Are purple and tawny, and edged with gold;  
 Soft as the silence after a hymn  
 Is the hush that falls as the light grows dim.

Not even the thought of a sound is heard,  
Till the dusk is thrilled by a hidden bird  
That suddenly sings, as the light grows dim,  
Its wonderful, passionate vesper hymn."

The witching time of twilight is the favorite of the poet ; it is the stilly hour of sweet vigils, visions, and vespers. Eventide is the pleasant time for study, reading, and meditation.

" Oh, precious evenings ! all too swiftly sped !  
Leaving us heir to amplest heritages  
Of all the best thoughts of the greatest sages,  
And giving tongues unto the silent dead !"

The Greek poets gave to night the beautiful name *Euphrone*, indicating the time of good feeling, of hope, of calm yet joyous contemplation.

" Evening comes on with glowing sky,  
And golden bars upraised on high  
To let the weary sun pass by ;  
Then follows that uncertain light,  
Which hesitates 'twixt day and night,  
And poets designate twilight."

Touching twilight, Leigh Hunt, in one of his admirable essays, gives us some humorous lines on this twilight, which he regards as a most unserviceable sort of sky-light.

“ Weak, wavering gleam, that, wending on its way  
Towards the night, still lingers with the day.  
Twilight’s a half-and-half affair, that would  
With all its heart be moonlight, if it could.

. . . . .

Something between blank darkness and broad  
light, —

Like dotard Day coquetting with young Night.

Hail, gentle night ! Thou art the almoner  
of blessings to the weary wayfarer, to the  
sick and the poor ; for under thy benign  
and peaceful reign, the tumultuous passions  
are stilled, the strife of tongues hushed, and  
thou bringest to all sorrow and suffering thy  
“ sweet, oblivious antidote,” — sleep.

“ Day hath its golden pomp, its brilliant scenes ;

But richer gifts are thine alone :

A strange, mysterious charm belongs to thee,

To morning, noon, and eventide unknown.”

Night has been styled “ the mother of  
day,” and by another, poetically, as “ Nature  
in mourning for the loss of the sun.” Yet  
with all her sombre guise, and darkened face,  
is she not an almoner of rich blessings to the  
sons and daughters of toil, and especially to  
the suffering and the sad.

“Night is the time for rest. How sweet, when labors  
close,  
To gather round an aching breast the curtain of  
repose ;  
Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head  
Upon our own delightful bed !”

The following lines are in sympathy with  
the inspiration of this stilly hour :—

“ Heavy dews  
Pearl the soft eyelids of night-cradled flowers,  
That, opening, smile but when the warm sun woos,  
In daylight’s golden hours.  
Sadness comes o’er me with the twilight gray ;  
And, with the day, my rhyme is laid away.”

And as, perchance, the present may prove  
the witching hour with the patient reader, it  
only remains to wish him — a good-night.



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